# "WHO SHAMES A SCRIBLER?": SCANDAL AND PRINT CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN

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ABSTRACT

"WHO SHAMES A SCRIBLER?": SCANDAL AND PRINT CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN

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Early eighteenth-century British print culture abounds with texts that put that put the private behavior of real individuals on public display. Such "scandal writing" (a genre that in my definition includes scandal narratives, personal satire, libel and pamphlet attacks) negotiates public authority through the manipulation of individual reputation. By conceiving of public discourse as a form of personal attack, such writing challenges Jurgen Habermas's depiction of the British eighteenth-century public sphere as a space of purely rational discourse and points to the existence of a counter-public sphere, one characterized by less disinterested norms of exchange.

This dissertation presents a two-pronged argument. First, it contends that the concepts of scandal and the hack writer were developed to legitimate satire and the professional author. Personal satirists identified scandal as the defamatory genre, thus suggesting that their satirical texts were not associated with detractive practices. Similarly, authors participating in but nevertheless ambivalent about the literary marketplace invented the hack as the embodiment of commercial

authorship. Pope, Swift, Addison and others rely on the tactics of scandal to promote their vision of the hack while deploring scandal as the hack's contamination of print culture.

Second, the dissertation argues that scandal writing was the conduit through which public authority was mediated by private life. Scandal writing produces a conception of privacy that it also undermines. The private life is conceptualized as a separate realm that can be exposed to public scrutiny. In its exposure, however, it becomes a dimension of the public sphere. The clearly fictional nature of such representations (prominent among them, certain pamphlet representations of Pope) marks them as simulacrums of exposure, though their fictionality did not diminish their purchase on the public imagination. Scandal's private self is a textual self, a product of print culture. The two lines of the dissertation's argument come together in the idea of the constructed nature of scandal writing and its object: the private selves scandal writing claimed to expose were as much inventions as the very concepts of scandal and satire, literary author and hack.

To Jean and Joseph McGarvey
and in memory of Helen McCormack

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# INTRODUCTION

Issues of reputation animated early print culture in Britain. While the libel laws -- the primary form of press regulation in the eighteenth century -- sought to protect a person's "good name," the literary marketplace was rife with texts that scrutinized and attempted to undermine public standing with accounts of private conduct. Scandal, in the early eighteenth century, described not just an event but a way of writing. It denoted the deliberate publication of private information in a calculated effort to diminish another person's reputation. What I broadly define as "scandal writing" -- encompassing scandal narratives, personal satire, pamphlet attacks and libels -- simultaneously posited and blurred a demarcation between private and public.[1]

In this dissertation, I examine scandal writing as a seminal genre in the early eighteenth century, when print technology was transforming publicity through the creation of the mass audience, and the nature and norms of the emerging public sphere were as yet only beginning, tumultuously, to coalesce. This newly constituted public sphere was inextricably linked to the private sphere -- each implying its supplement and opposite. As such, the private sphere is at once necessary to the idea of publicness and that which makes publicness inherently unstable. In my argument, I undertake to show that this instability

manifests itself in a body of writing that exploited the private underside of public life: scandal, of which even Pope's and Swift's personal satire is a version. Scandal was mobilized as part of the production of both the public and the private.

My project is in part a response to Jurgen Habermas's now-classic formulation of the eighteenth-century bourgeois public sphere. The dimension of print culture that Habermas emphasizes brings rationality, critical distance and impartiality into the foreground. Many texts published in the early eighteenth century, however, do not conform to the parameters of critical-rational debate that Habermas describes. It is my contention that scandal writing appeals to a different form of critical public than that which Habermas defines in his Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. I posit the existence of a scandalous part of a counter-public sphere. This critical public is characterized not by impersonal rationality, but by personal interest and insinuation. It is a new kind of critique, based on revealing secrets and impugning character, which was as vital and influential a form of public discourse as the rationality Habermas analyzes. Scandal existed alongside rational exchange, neither exclusively defining the nascent public sphere. Habermas, I am suggesting, shows only one side of this competitive relationship.

The term "counter-public" has been employed before to supplement and challenge Habermas's account of the public

sphere, by critics such as Nancy Fraser and Michael Warner.[2] Both identify "counter-publics" as groups of individuals that define themselves against a larger public; they are "alternative publics," consciously subordinate to the broader public body. Fraser and Warner cite a variety of examples: minority groups, women, gays and lesbians, workers. These counter-publics emerge because their members' interests have been excluded from consideration in the public sphere generally. In using the term "counter-public sphere," however, I mean to denote a different kind of public critique (scandalous rather than rational), not a different public body. Fraser and Warner use "counter-public" to indicate a public defined in relation to the hegemonic group; I use the term to denote the public sphere as influenced by a counter-form of publicity: scandal.[3]

The view that Habermas takes of print culture in eighteenth-century Britain is a narrow one, and one that supports his theoretical blueprint of the bourgeois public sphere. This sphere, he argues, was a social structure most fully realized in the eighteenth century, when a sense of "the public" as differentiated from the state emerged and mechanisms such as coffee houses, salons, and the periodical press enabled the populace to participate in debates over issues concerning commodity exchange and social labor.[4] The public sphere consisted of private people interacting as a public group, defined in opposition to public authority.

Interaction in the public sphere took the form of critical-rational debate. Such critical-rational discourse, Habermas argues, was the distinctive innovation of the bourgeois public sphere: "The medium of this political confrontation [wherein private people came together as a public to debate the actions of public authorities] was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason" (27).

When Habermas identifies institutions such as coffee houses as sites of critical-rational debate, he makes them embodiments of an idealized form of discourse. There are three main attributes of the public discussion taking place there. First, status does not figure in these discussions. Habermas explains that such institutions "preserved a kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing the equality of status, disregarded status altogether. The tendency replaced the celebration of rank with a tact befitting equals" (36). Second, these debates problematized areas of "common concern" -- religion, philosophy, literature, art -- as the new critical public challenged church and state authorities' monopoly over their interpretation. "The private people for whom the cultural product became available as a commodity profaned it inasmuch as they had to determine its meaning on their own (by way of rational communication with one another), verbalize it, and thus state explicitly what precisely in its implicitness for so long could assert its authority" (37). Finally, "the

public" must be, in principle, inclusive. As soon as it discounted any person or group from possible inclusion, it would cease to be "the public." Habermas argues that the "issues discussed became 'general' not merely in their significance, but also in their accessibility: everyone had to be able to participate" (37).[5]

The essential qualities of the public sphere Habermas describes are rationality and openness, and he sees these qualities reflected in the publications of the age. Print is key to the inclusivity he stipulates, so central, he writes, that the bourgeois public sphere's "decisive mark" was the "published word" (16). Habermas's consideration of eighteenth-century England's print culture, however, is cursory and constricted. He concentrates on periodicals such as the Tatler and Spectator, and he positions them as purely an extension of coffee-house discussion (which he has already situated as critical-rational debate's point of origin). Joseph Addison and Richard Steele first published The Tatler in 1709, Habermas explains, to facilitate contact between the legion of coffee house discussants:

> the coffee houses were already so numerous and the circles of their frequenters already so wide, that contact among these thousandfold circles could only be maintained through a journal. At the same time, the new periodical was so intimately interwoven with the life of the coffee houses that the individual issues were indeed sufficient basis for its reconstruction. (42)

Habermas represents these texts -- and he uses them synecdochically for print culture generally -- as artifacts

of the public exercise of reason, and the account of print culture he gives emphasizes publishing's service to reason and accessibility.[6] His account, however, does not address the vast quantity of texts that did not mirror these periodicals in tone or purpose; nor does it hint at the anxiety and resistance with which many authors (including those who now function almost iconicly for the period) responded to the idea of an inclusive, participatory public sphere.

Journals such as the Tatler and Spectator were committed to fostering the reading public as a polite body. The readership they envision and encourage -- the atmosphere of the public sphere they endorse -- conforms to Habermas's idea of the critical public: a body of private persons engaged in critical-rational debate. But this vision of a decorous public sphere vied for influence with a scandalous public sphere. Addison himself acknowledges this in the Spectator when he tells readers -- some of whom clearly have other expectations -- that he will not engage in scandal writing. He has received correspondence from

> such as fill their letters with private scandal, and black accounts of particular persons and families. The world is so full of ill-nature, that I have lampoons sent me by people who cannot spell, and satires composed by those who scarce know how to write. I must therefore inform these my correspondents, that it is not my design to be a publisher of intrigues and cuckoldoms, or to bring little infamous stories out of their present lurking holes into broad day-light [. . .]. At the same time I am very sensible that nothing spreads a paper like private calumny and defamation; but as my speculations are not under

> this necessity, they are not exposed to this temptation.[7]

Addison touches here on three important ideas: first, that the organs of publicity can be devoted to excavating the private; second, that such an enterprise is tied to commercial ambition; and third, that scandal is a lesser form of public discourse and those who cleave to it are ill-equipped to exercise a public voice, while suggesting, too, that literacy promotes rationality. The violation of private life and the debasement of public discourse that Addison assumes in scandal writing obscure the way in which private life is actually realized through its production in print.

Habermas distinguishes between three related spheres: the public, the private and the intimate. His theorizing rests on their simultaneous uniqueness and interpenetration. The "public" has a dual existence as, on the one hand, the "sphere of public authority" and, on the other, the political and literary public spheres that monitor and evaluate the sphere of public authority. The private sphere is a domain distinct from the public as a space independent of public authority, "a sphere in which private people pursued their affairs with one another free from impositions by estate and state, at least in tendency" (75). Because issues pertaining to this domain are of public interest, however, the private sphere furnishes matter for the critical judgment exercised in the public sphere. Finally,

the intimate sphere is a region of the private sphere, that held to be beyond the boundaries or compass of the public: the family and home.[8] It is, Habermas explains, the "inner region of the private sphere" and the "source of privateness in the modern sense of a saturated and free interiority" (28). The intimate sphere, the "domain of pure humanity" (46), is where subjectivity resides, where the private, autonomous self is grounded.

Even the intimate sphere is a kind of public space. Habermas explores the public enactment of this sphere, asserting that, despite its essential, agreed upon isolation, it is "always already oriented to an audience" (49). As an example of its performative aspect, Habermas cites the sentimental novel, envisioning author and readers together gently probing the new experience of interior subjectivity. The result is a bonding that effaces the phenomenon of publicity, returning the author/reader relationship to the intimate sphere:

> The relations between author, work, and public changed. They became intimate mutual relationships between privatized individuals who were psychologically interested in what was "human," in self-knowledge, and in empathy. Richardson wept over the actors in his novels as much as his readers did; authors and readers themselves became actors who "talked heart to heart." (50)

The public sphere of the reading public in the first half of the century was a considerably more bruising, rough-and-tumble place. While Habermas depicts sentimentality as drawing the public into the intimate

realm, the counter-public sphere strips the intimate realm of its sanctity and puts it on display before a mass audience. The counter-public sphere's appropriation of the private for public display is crucial to the distinction between gossip and scandal. Gossip is fundamentally private, usually an exchange between intimates or acquaintances. It both acknowledges and fosters a bond -- the gossipers share common associates about whom to talk, and in talking augment their own relationship.[9] Scandal, on the other hand, is a product of mass culture. It moves discussion outside the circle of intimates and into the broader public. As such, scandal is a phenomenon tied to the widespread use and availability of print and the development of the anonymous audience. While gossip operates in the region between the private and intimate spheres (making events of the intimate life the subject of private discussion), scandal reaches between the poles of the intimate and public spheres, putting the intimate life on public display. At the same time, scandal is founded on precisely the premise that Habermas presents as the defining assumption of the intimate sphere: that a person is determined by interior self, not social role. When scandal represents the intimate life, it does so on the claim that there is public purchase on an interior self, at least as it is revealed through private actions.

With the emergence of the intimate sphere comes a new conception of the person, whose selfhood is rooted in

private life. When the private self is posited as the "real" self, however, that private self becomes publicly relevant.[10] The private self is thus never extricated from the public; indeed, the concept that there is an interior self not defined by social role emerges with the new public sphere.[11] Print provides a means of producing oneself and others for public consumption. Scandal writing capitalizes on the resulting fluidity of identity, purporting to expose a private self, while in fact putting forth multiple representations of such a self.

This phenomenon was brought to bear in the political realm by such a prominent writer of scandal fiction as Delarivier Manley, who constitutes the subject of chapter two. Manley provides an exemplary instance of how scandal contended with rational exchange as a form of public discourse. Her texts present loosely organized stories, under a transparent fictional veil, about the private lives of real individuals. She marshals these stories to political effect, with the purpose of discrediting the ruling Whigs, unseating them from public power by acquainting the public with their private misdeeds. These narratives have been the focus of most recent work on eighteenth-century scandal, but, for the most part, such criticism has emphasized the fictional dimension of Manley's work. As accounts of the history of the novel have been revised to include the women writers so long omitted, Manley's work has been situated within the patterns of the

emerging novel. In this context, scandal becomes the raw material of Manley's early attempts at novelistic narrative. The texts are at best unsatisfying on these grounds, however, because their interest does not correspond to that of the novel -- traditionally, a sustained narrative line, a cast of developing characters, and so on. It is the cumulative effect of these discrete episodes of scandal that drives Manley's work. I shall argue that rather than seeking to shoehorn Manley's writing into the patterns of the novel as they later developed, we should view her texts as part of the environment of detractive writing in which they were published. In her day, Manley was held to be the embodiment of scandal and her texts provided an unparalleled demonstration of how private selves functioned as public constructions. Her work, most notably The Adventures of Rivella, demonstrates the productive capacity of print; in Rivella, Manley seeks to appropriate the power of self-representation. Unlike Alexander Pope, however, who engages in a similar effort, Manley enters into rather than strains against the mutability of any such representation.

The status of scandal writing was the subject of contention during the early portion of the long eighteenth century, when writers debated the permissibility and value of personal satire. I investigate this debate and the libel law that surrounded it in my first chapter. When the legal injunction against defamation separated into slander law and libel law in the seventeenth century, libel was the far

graver offense because the law held that written detraction constituted a more calculated abuse than spoken words. The truth of one's statements, furthermore, was no defense; truthful allegations were more damaging to reputation precisely because they were true, and libel law gave priority to the preservation of reputation. The cultural assumptions about writing and reputation, as they were expressed in the law, were squarely opposed to scandal writing. Yet as print culture took hold, scandal was clearly a compelling form of public discourse. This discrepancy, I postulate, arose in part because legal devotion to stability was at odds with the impulsive, formidably unstable atmosphere of early print culture and the literary market that created it. Within print culture, reputation became far more malleable than the law suggested it could be; while legal redress for defamation was concerned with maintaining a reputation intact, print culture showed reputation to be not a stable entity that could be damaged and then restored but rather a continuous process of construction and revision.

Attitudes toward scandal as public discourse were enmeshed in reaction to the literary marketplace. The roots of this market lay in the seventeenth century. While the technology of print had spread steadily since the introduction of the printing press to England in 1475, the Civil War sped the evolution of print culture. Both sides in the war turned to pamphleteering as a way to win support

for their cause, and the increased availability of printed material encouraged an increase in the rate of literacy. The production of printed material remained high in the years of the Restoration and, at the end of the century, in 1695, Parliament allowed the Licensing Act to lapse. This legislation had provided for the regulation of printers and the publications they produced. Without it, England became the only country in Europe that did not have pre-publication censorship. It is easy to see why, in such a climate, early eighteenth-century writers became preoccupied with questions about what one could justifiably reveal about another person in print, and what the foundations of and obligations to reputation ought to be.

As the popularity of print transformed the literary scene from a patronage to a market system, the idea of writing itself was transformed. It was not only the reception of print that was popularized -- so, too, was its production. By contrast to earlier concepts of authorship that saw writing as an expression of intellectual or social cultivation, authorship could now be a form of work, with the author living on the profits that the writing earned. The distinction between these categories of authorship was not impervious. Numerous critics of Alexander Pope have examined Pope's negotiation of these constructions of the author, profiting handsomely from his verse while simultaneously -- and as a result -- presenting himself as a "gentleman." What has received little discussion, however,

is that while Pope manipulated these categories to his own advantage, he and his circle were instrumental to their function and perpetuation. This is the subject of chapter three. Pope and Jonathan Swift, on whom I focus there, both engage in and repudiate scandal as public discourse. Their ambivalence is related to their complex feelings toward the literary marketplace, in which they must compete and want to dominate, but which they also revile as a diminishment of authorship into a trade serving a body of uneducated and unruly readers. These feelings find expression and attempted resolution in the figure of the Grub Street hack. This familiar shadow in eighteenth-century writing -- by design, more read about than read, at least today -- was, I contend, the invention of writers such as Pope and Swift, who were eager to institute hierarchy in the market, to fix difference in what Habermas has guided us to think of as the equitable environment of the public sphere. The distinction drawn in the period between the literary writer and the hack writer is a fundamental one -- so fundamental that even critics today have tended to accept it as natural, without questioning what was at stake in giving us the idea of the "hack," the writer whose artlessness and self-interest debase literature, who reduces art to commerce.

Scandal writing and the hack are knit together in this view, one the degradation of public discourse, the other the degradation of authorship. If the hack was what the author might become in the new economy of writing, then scandal was

what literature could become. Indeed, anxiety about the commodification of writing found some of its strongest expression in discussions of scandal. Scandal writing was held to be motivated by envy and a desire for profit. The writer could make money by catering to the prurience and envy of the public. Scandal was also ephemeral and without literary value. It had no classical precedent and existed only long enough to be sold. Writers such as Dryden, Pope and Steele suggest repeatedly that scandal writers would be remembered only if they were to choose to write about them.[12] Scandal writing was, furthermore, the dangerous result of unregulated publicity and a commercialized literary sphere. It was evidence that now anything could find its way into print. Authority over the literary realm had evaporated and in turn made possible a further erosion of authority: the result of the new literary sphere would be to make those authors who believed they had a rightful claim to cultural authority indistinguishable from the growing mass of writers.

Our acceptance of the hack as a useful category for ordering the world of eighteenth-century writing obscures the vociferousness with which the authors so-designated resisted their characterization. In the final chapter, I turn to Alexander Pope's scandal writing and the pamphlet attacks directed against him. The status of Pope's verse as satirical or defamatory was the topic of sustained discussion in the period. Pope is a tireless advocate for

the social benefits of his work, an advocacy that puts him in the delicate position of explaining that his poems are not destructive libel while at the same time proclaiming the public good achieved by his exposure of others' vices and flaws. In "The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated," for example, Pope rehearses the defense he would offer in court against a charge that he had written libels: they are only "grave Epistles, bringing Vice to light."[13] He vows, meanwhile, to endure the defamation inflicted by those who object to his purpose.

Needless to say, not all of Pope's contemporaries agreed with his self-portrait of noble service -- and his employment of defamatory tactics offended doubly in view of his attribution of scandal to those whom he held himself above. This is the context for understanding Pope's Dunciad, a text perhaps better described as detonated than published. A mock-epic on the state of culture and authorship in his day, the Dunciad did more than any other piece of writing to establish the image of the Grub Street hack. Within the poem itself and especially in the copious footnotes of the Dunciad Variorum, Pope ravages the reputations of his contemporary writers. The attack (repeated and augmented in revised editions) brought a barrage of answering pamphlets in prose and verse. Most of the authors are individuals targeted in Pope's poem, among them Edward Ward, John Henley, John Duckett, John Oldmixon, John Dennis, and Jonathan Smedley. The pamphleteers respond

that Pope is no different than they are -- that if they are hacks, so is he, for he employs the same tactics in his writing. They use his private life to dispute the public standing he claims for himself, using often cruel depictions of his physical deformity to represent the disparity between his actual self and his public presentation. The "Paper Wars," in the words of one contemporary, that many of the period's authors were engaged in demonstrate the counter-public sphere at work, as public authority is contested through appeal to the private self, a self that is not exposed but conjured and so exists only in a state of various representation. This idea is exemplified in the pamphlet A Popp Upon Pope (1728), which offers the anonymous author's satisfying fantasy of Pope, while out for a stroll, being thrashed soundly by two Dunciad victims and then rescued by a neighboring woman. This inventive tale nevertheless compelled Pope to publish a protestation informing the public that the story could not be true because he "did not stir out of my House at Twickenham all that Day." The obvious fictionality of this simulacrum of exposure is irrelevant; the private self exists only in its public representation.

Together, the texts I examine in this dissertation suggest rationality's inadequacy to encompass eighteenth-century public exchange. My argument's purpose, however, extends beyond the familiar observation that the period was not quite the realm of reason it was

traditionally held to be. Rather, in positing scandalous discourse as evidentiary of a counter-public sphere, I mean to show that these texts are not aberrational, but conform to norms of exchange at a time when the private became part of public life.

NOTES

[1] Two helpful overviews of the complexities involved in the distinction between private and public are Jeff Weintraub's "The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction," Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy, ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1997), 1-42; and S. I. Benn and G. F. Gaus, "The Public and the Private: Concepts and Action," Public and Private in Social Life, ed. S. I. Benn and G. F. Gaus (New York: Saint Martin's, 1985), 3-27. See also Philippe Ariès, ed., A History of Private Life, Vol. 3, Passions of the Renaissance, ed. Roger Chartier, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989).

[2] Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," Habermas and the Public Sphere, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: MIT P, 1992), esp. 122-28; Michael Warner, "Public and Private," forthcoming in Critical Terms for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, ed. Catharine Stimpson and Gil Herdt (Chicago: U of Chicago P). See also, for example, Rita Felski's chapter, "The Feminist Counter-public Sphere" in her book, Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989), 164-74.

[3] The closest equivalent to what I am here suggesting is Joan Landes's description in Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988) of dispossessed writers in eighteenth-century France who, shut out from patronage and resentful of the representatives of high culture who excluded them, turned to "biting social criticism, flavored by scandal and pornography" (55). She situates this writing as "underground," a "clandestine counterpublic sphere" that saw salons as "among the worst symptoms of the despised system of privilege whose destruction they hoped to ensure" (57). While Landes and I are alike in seeing in scandal writing a counter-public sphere, I see English scandal writing not as an underground form, but as one that met resistance because its opponents believed it threatened to define print culture.

[4] Jurgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, trans. Thomas Burger (1962; Cambridge: MIT P, 1994), 27.

[5] One recurrent theme of criticism of The Structural

Transformation of the Public Sphere is Habermas's failure to consider the exclusions on which the bourgeois public sphere he describes was based. See, for example, Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," and Geoff Eley, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century," both in Habermas and the Public Sphere.

[6] Dustin Griffin argues that the public sphere is a fiction that mirrors Scriblerian self-authorizing myths in "Fictions of Authorship," Essays in Criticism 43 (1993): 188. See also Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," where she notes that in Habermas's account, a "discourse of publicity touting accessibility, rationality, and the suspension of status hierarchies is itself deployed as a strategy of distinction" (115).

[7] Joseph Addison, The Spectator, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965) 1: 71-72.

[8] See Marie Fleming, "Women and the 'Public Use of Reason,'" Feminists Read Habermas: Gendering the Subject of Discourse, ed. Johanna Meehan (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[9] Patricia Meyer Spacks, Gossip (New York: Knopf, 1985) 5.

[10] See John Brewer, "This, that and the other: Public, Social and Private in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," Shifting the Boundaries: Transformation of the Languages of Public and Private in the Eighteenth Century, ed. Dario Castiglione and Lesley Sharpe (Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1995) 1-21. Brewer observes that "the public sphere produced an unprecedented discussion and unparalleled public exposure of private life" (6).

[11] For discussion of the development of this private self, see, for example, Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987).

[12] See John Dryden, Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire in The Works of John Dryden, ed. H. T. Swedenberg (Berkeley: U of California P, 1974) 4: 9. See also The Spectator no. 445, 4: 72.

[13] Alexander Pope, "First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated," Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. John Butt (London: Methuen, 1961) 4: 21.

# CHAPTER ONE

## CIRCULATING REPUTATIONS: SCANDAL, SATIRE AND THE LAW

> "I would not make myself merry even with a Piece of Pasteboard that is invested with a public Character."
>
> Joseph Addison, The Spectator[1]

In 1712, and again in 1713, Queen Anne called upon Parliament to halt "this growing evil" -- the publication of libels. Her outcry came in direct response to publications criticizing her government's effort to negotiate a peace settlement to the War of the Spanish Succession. But her words also express an anxiety widespread in the period about published personal attack in an unregulated press. While we today think of "libel" primarily as a legal charge, in the eighteenth century, it also denoted a literary genre. Personal attack thrived in the literary marketplace as libel, scandal and satire. Despite this, scandal writing -- which I define as writing intended to diminish another person's reputation -- has received little address within eighteenth-century studies. New interest in the rise of the literary marketplace and the eighteenth century's redefinition of the public sphere has created a lively context in which to examine scandal and to turn attention to

a print culture that does not conform to the paradigms of rational exchange.

With scandal writing, reputation became a product -- a creation and a commodity -- of print culture. It was formed, sustained, changed, and communicated through print. Reputation, one's capital in the social and, increasingly, the political economy, was newly malleable. Charges made against one were no longer contained by one's social circle; they now played out in the wide venue of print. Print became the site at which reputations were constructed. The question of "public Character," to return to Addison's phrase, was vital in the eighteenth century. It was with print culture that the modern idea of the public life emerged.

In this chapter, I will discuss the concept of libel and its legal history, examine the changing importance of reputation in the period, and investigate how these two factors came together in the debate over scandal and satire that took place in the early eighteenth century. Scandal, as the term was used, described not an event, but a mode of discourse -- and the fear that animated many of the "established" writers was that it was the form of discourse that would come to define the developing culture of print.

**LIBEL LAW AND THE CULTURE OF PRINT**

Central to a discussion of scandal is the history of libel law in England, both because it outlines the

conditions within which writers published and because it is a codified expression of the culture's definition of and attitudes toward scandal and print. Libel's legal history is complex and surprisingly haphazard, as competing interests dictated jurisdiction, and jurisdiction in turn defined the nature of the offense and its remedies. The place to begin, then, is with the structure of the legal system itself.

**The History of the Courts**

Libel was originally a matter of local concern in England. In the Anglo-Saxon period, defamation was first the crime of insulting another person to his or her face; gradually the definition was expanded to include talking about this person to a third party. The local jurisdiction survived into the era of Norman rule. William the Conqueror separated the ecclesiastical and secular courts, and the royal courts willingly ceded jurisdiction over defamation to the ecclesiastical courts, with one major exception, until the late sixteenth century.[2] Canon law derived its authority over defamation from the church's position as moral arbiter: "The jurisdictional competency of the church was based on its claim to corrective authority over all matters concerning the Christian faith and morals; and its interest in defamation reflected, at least indirectly, these jurisdictional pretensions" (Jones 275).

The operations of the church had important implications for the idea of reputation. Canon law punished not only the defamer, but the person defamed -- a bad reputation was sufficient for the church to bring a person before its justice system (Jones 275). As legal historian T. H. Plucknett explains,

> the very word 'defamation' is a technical term in church law, signifying that evil reputation which is sufficiently notorious to put a man on his trial. Mere rumor is not sufficient. The diffimatus is thus a person whose reputation is so bad that it serves as an accusation; but if as a result of the trial he is acquitted, then clearly his ill-fame was unfounded, and those who spread the calumny have themselves committed a crime.[3]

In the eyes of church law, reputation was both that which must be protected from the wrongful defamer and that which signaled its owner's true moral standing. Reputation thus seems to have been regarded as a reliable index of character. It was the crime of the diffimatus that was primary; defamation was discouraged because false accusations, which would put the ecclesiastical justice system in motion, could cost that system its credibility and authority.

Throughout the middle ages, defamation remained a local concern, as the church shared the punishment of detraction with borough and manor courts (Jones 278). In 1275, the king issued the scandalum magnatum statute. This important law in the history of libel, which I will discuss in detail below, marked the first time that defamation became prosecutable in the king's court. With the exception of

scandalum magnatum, however, which prohibited defamation of the monarch or magnates, the royal and common law courts did not challenge the ecclesiastical courts for jurisdiction over defamation cases until the reign of Elizabeth I. The political instability of her rule prompted an increased determination on the part of the government to silence critical remarks (Plucknett 486). While scandalum magnatum gave the royal courts a stake in seditious defamation from the thirteenth century, it was only later that they took up this authority:

> During the middle ages this jurisdictional competency had only occasionally been exercised, but the eruption of religious controversy in the sixteenth century, and of constitutional crisis in the seventeenth century, increased official concern over sedition and political dissent [. . .]. The defamation of the state and its servitors quickly came to be regarded with a degree of alarm that the slander of private persons never elicited. (Jones 281)

The move began with royal writs of prohibition, which refused the ecclesiastical courts jurisdiction over secular crimes. By the early seventeenth century, the royal courts were trying slander cases concerned with moral and spiritual crimes on the grounds that these cases, too, had secular implications (Jones 279). As of the early 1600s, then, it was the royal courts that were developing and applying the law of defamation.

The distinction that we make today between the two main kinds of detraction -- slander (spoken) and libel (written) -- did not develop until the seventeenth century.

Initially, the distinction was simply a matter of jurisdiction. Slander was a tort action and thus was actionable only in the common law courts, while libel could be tried as a tort or a crime or both, and thereby fell within the jurisdiction of the Star Chamber. This separation of courts meant that libel law developed in isolation from slander law until the latter half of the seventeenth century.[4] When the Star Chamber was abolished on August 1, 1641, Cromwell's Council of State took over its function. After the Restoration, the Court of the King's Bench replaced the Council of State. The Court of the King's Bench had developed slander law; in taking on the role of the former Star Chamber, slander and libel law came together for the first time. As a result, the distinction between spoken and written detraction became procedurally crucial.

## Scandalum Magnatum and the Development of Libel

The scandalum magnatum statute issued by Edward I in 1275 declared that:

> Forasmuch as there have been oftentimes found in the Country [Devisors] of Tales, whereby discord [or occasion] of discord, hath many times arisen between the King and his People, or Great Men of this Realm; for the Damage that hath and may thereof ensue; It is commanded, That from henceforth none be so hardy to tell or publish any false News or Tales, whereby discord or [occasion] of discord or slander may grow between the King and his People, or the Great Men of the Realm; and he that doth so, shall be taken and kept in Prison, until he hath brought him into the Court, [which was the first Author of the Tale].[5]

It was, as Plucknett has observed, an essentially political concept of defamation: offenders were prosecuted on the grounds that they posed a threat to civil discord (486). Scandalum magnatum was designed to protect the government and ruling class from criticism, with the reasoning that such a law served the public good because to allow defamation of authorities would be to invite instability. Nineteenth-century jurist Francis Ludlow Holt, in one of the most complete accounts of English libel law, argues that scandalum magnatum was not so much a matter of delineating new crimes as it was a matter of expanding the law to protect the magnates:

> In substance, this statute creates no new offense, and prohibits nothing but what was prohibited by the common law before; but, in respect to the dignity of the persons for whose protection it was made, it comprehends within its penalties the less offensive modes and terms of slander of which the common law took no cognizance, and marks out a new proceeding to redress them.[6]

Scandalum magnatum was a crime, not a tort, because it applied to the king and the magnates; scandalum magnatum is the foundation of libel law as it developed in the seventeenth century because the charge of libel, too, assumed criminality.

Scandalum magnatum was pursued in two legal arenas: the Star Chamber and Privy Council, and the common law courts. The former took action against the political offense of defamation. The penalty could be harsh -- mutilation, such as branding of the face, or cutting off of tongue, hand, or

ear.[7] The common law courts were responsible for the civil aspects of defamation. The scandalum magnatum statute made no provision for civil remedy, but in the middle sixteenth century, the courts decided that the defamed should be able to collect compensation for the damage done to his or her reputation (Plucknett 486).

The scandalum magnatum statutes were both pragmatic and political, designed to prevent criticism of the government. They were also disablingly narrow -- for example, their prohibition of "false news" did not address the issue of criticism that was not deceitful. The need to regulate true but damaging statements created one of the most interesting turns in English defamation law.

**Truth and Libel**

In the church courts, a person could be found guilty of defamation only if his accusations were untrue, for revealing the truth was neither sin nor infraction.[8] Similarly, the scandalum magnatum statutes were explicit in their outlawing only of "false news" about the monarch and magnates. This stipulation, the courts and crown found, was at odds with the purpose of the statute: to prevent the spread of words that could harm the state. True accusations, they realized, were at least as damaging as false ones. While nothing either in Roman law -- the precedent for much English political law -- or in the scandalum magnatum statutes themselves provided for this,

the common law courts (which are not bound by the written law) took the position that truth could not be offered as a defense in a libel case (Plucknett 490). This was justified on three main grounds. First, the courts argued that the defamer should take the complaint before the law rather than addressing the matter him- or herself (Plucknett 490). Second, the Crown argued that its main concern was to prevent disturbances of the peace that detraction might incite. Because the populace could rise up in reaction to a true statement as well as to a false one, the truth of the statement was not exculpatory. "Indeed," critic C. R. Kropf comments, "since a true statement was more likely to lead to public discontent than a false one, the former kind of defamation was regarded as the greater crime."[9] Third, the courts held that the malicious intent upon another person's reputation that writing represented superceded all possible justification (Plucknett 490). Libel law was thus especially concerned with controlling the act of exposure.

The precedent-setting trial was the De Libellis Famois case of 1606. It was in this case that the court ruled that the truth of one's accusations does not justify those accusations because such charges ought to be made in a court of law, not in the court of public opinion. The Libellis Famois ruling that truth does not matter was a way for the government to evade the scandalum magnatum requirement that the criticism of the magnates be false.[10] The case was,

above all, concerned with the preservation of order. R. C. Donnelly explains:

> In adopting libellus famosus [one of two forms of Roman defamation law], the Star Chamber ignored its Roman limitations and for the first time introduced into the English law a new type of defamation based upon mere form, with the additional principle that a libel is punishable because it tends to a breach of the peace. (118)

It was with this development that libel and slander definitively cleaved apart. One could plead truthfulness as a defense in a case of slander, even if the words one was charged with speaking were directed against a magnate. The same words could not then be published, however, despite the court's having found them true (Holt 26). "[T]he English law of libel or published defamation," Jones writes, "fashioned in response to technological change, constitutional change, and ideological ferment, has a history very different from that of the common law of slander" (282). Certain words were not defamatory when spoken, but were defamatory, and thereby potentially criminal, when written. This led to a small industry of books listing the forbidden words. In his book of 1647, Actions for Slander, a catalogue of cases and actionable scenarios, John March discusses the actionability of words:

> That all scandalous words which touch or concerne a man in his life, Liberty, or Member, or any corporal punishment; or which scandall a man in his Office or place of Trust; or in his Calling or function by which he gaines his living; or which tended to slandering of his Title or his disinheritance; or to the losse of his advance, or preferment, or any other particular damage; or

> lastly which charge a man to have any dangerous infectious disease by reason of which he ought to separate himselfe, or to be separated by the Law from the society of men: all such words are actionable.[11]

While evidence in slander cases was construed in the defendant's favor -- words were given the most innocent possible meaning, and were not actionable if the evidence suggested that they were spoken in the heat of the moment (Jones 282) -- libel law assumed the malicious intent that slander law required to be proved. The very existence of the document in question was evidence of one's libelous intent, of one's premeditated effort to destroy the plaintiff's reputation. "The theory," Plucknett reflects, "seems to regard writing as so deliberate an act that writing defamatory matter was criminal; words, on the other hand, were felt to be more spontaneous and irresponsible, and so justification could be pleaded" (490). This attitude toward print as a force to be contained affected the resistance to popular authorship that I discuss in chapter three.

The issue of truth in libel law dramatizes the conflict underpinning the emergence of print culture. The state of being printed, which implied authority, and the presumed deliberateness of a printed statement were at odds with publication's popularization and increasing accessibility. Libel law developed as part of an effort to control printed exchange. The law's stance toward the truth of a printed statement both acknowledged and augmented print's cultural

value by treating it as something that must be strenuously regulated. Thus, the law strove to contain an authority of print that it simultaneously reinforced.

**The Lapse of the Licensing Act and Libel Law**

For the first fifty years after the introduction of print to England in 1476, there was little legal interest in it. Under Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, however, the government moved swiftly and decisively to take control of printing (Siebert 2). In 1529, the first list of banned books was published; with Henry's Proclamation of 1538, the government introduced a regular system of licensing and censorship. The crown, Siebert explains, claimed control of the press as a prerogative right, a claim that expired only with the Revolution in 1688. The crown's authority to control print was based on three assertions. First, that it was the king who first had seen to it that print should be introduced to England. Second, that the peace and stability of the country depended on control of the press. And third, that regulation by the crown had been in existence since 1476 (Siebert 21).

Printing came under regulation by the same body -- the Star Chamber -- that was responsible for suppressing sedition (Jones 282). The effect of this congruence, Jones argues, was to "reinforc[e] the distinction between written and spoken defamation, which in its arbitrariness and absoluteness distinguished English law from other legal

traditions of early modern Europe" (282). Government control of the press, so tightly woven in the Tudor and early Stuart eras, began to unravel in the political upheavals of the seventeenth century. This was the period, for example, of John Milton's Areopagitica (1644), a strenuous argument against pre-publication censorship.[12]

In 1680, Charles II issued a royal proclamation saying that all news was printed at the royal prerogative. This position of absolute authority over public discourse could not be sustained after the Glorious Revolution, however, and government intervention in the press lessened.[13] In 1695, Parliament allowed the Licensing Act to lapse.[14] This was not a matter of omission. The case for allowing the Act to wither had been drawn up by none other than John Locke, and centered on the argument that the Act had failed in its purpose of preventing the publication of treason and sedition. The Licensing Act lacked teeth -- the punishment of offenders lay not with the Act itself, but with the common law (Hanson 7). While no one supported the idea that the press should be unrestrained in the wake of the Licensing Act's expiration, the House of Commons was unsuccessful in drafting and passing replacement legislation. Part of the reason no new system of licensing developed after 1695 is that both political parties "were afraid to trust the other with the administration of a licensing act" (Siebert 263). This new atmosphere of

unregulation was seen as instrumental to the proliferation of libels.

**REPRESENTING REPUTATION**

For much of the eighteenth century, the protection of two interests directed defamation law: "(1) the interest of the individual in his claim to honor and reputation; and (2) the interest in the public peace and security" (Donnelly 122). These were the long-standing priorities of defamation law. For example, "Anglo-Saxon kings punished slander for the dishonor and insult inflicted, and also for the threats defamation could pose to the public peace" (Jones 274). What changed, at least in part, however, was how reputation was conceived, as legal redress moved from a model of penance to compensation.

In English canon law before the Norman Conquest, the only form of remedy received by the plaintiff in a defamation case was a public apology from the defamer. The object of the law was, and was only, vindication (Eldredge 4). In the church courts after the Conquest, little changed. A guilty defamer was required to perform public penance. Thus, the purpose of the law remained vindication of the person defamed (Eldredge 5).

In the sixteenth century a new conception of reputation began to emerge. A plaintiff could now appeal to the civil courts to receive payment for the damage done to his reputation. M. Lindsay Kaplan depicts the sixteenth-century

concentration of the courts on the temporal damages of defamation as a fundamental change in purpose. She argues that the "gist of the common law action is not the restoration of reputation, which the ecclesiastical courts attempted to provide, but the compensation of temporal loss."[15] The move to assign an economic value to reputation is striking on several grounds. First, it reifies as an economic entity something that exists at two degrees of abstraction, as I will explain. Reputation becomes a quantifiable entity, for loss of or damage to which one can be monetarily reimbursed. Second, it solidifies the law's aim of preserving reputation, now using financial penalty to discourage defamation. At the same time, the law emphasizes reputation's importance in the market economy by focusing on detractive statement's potential harm to the victim's ability to make a living. Finally, this linkage of reputation and the market economy mirrors reputation's function in a social economy, as reputation is the social stock on which one trades (an important facet of Delarivier Manley's career, as I will examine in chapter two). Patricia Meyer Spacks's analysis of gossip illuminates this idea, when she identifies reputation as a form of social "currency":

> Tattling, like detraction, threatens a tender and valued aspect of social beings: their reputations. Reputation matters equally (though for different reasons) to men and to women [. . .]. The importance of a man's good name derives partly from his need to function in public. Reputation is social currency.[16]

While Kaplan suggests a disjunction between models of vindication and compensation, the system of monetary compensation might also be understood as a form of vindication in a market-based society. As the social model moves from defense of honor to protection of reputation, so the form of symbolic penance changes from a performative to an economic act.

**Defining Reputation**

Reputation is both highly personal and dissociated from the person. It is not the same as one's character; rather, it is what others take that character to be.[17] "A reputation is constituted by the set of definite descriptions with which the individual is habitually identified by others as a third party. It is the product of the different discourses which take the individual as their subject; a person 'is' for others what s/he is known or believed to have done."[18]

Reputation is further refracted by the fact that the existence of "a reputation" is illusory. As Walter Probert observes, reputation is not single or unified: "there is no public image, although there are possibly numerous individual images which can be reduced to a statistical probability (public image)."[19] Reputation, he goes on to explain, is really "a shorthand relational concept," a way of reducing a web of ties and opinions to a single object (1185).

Reputation in itself is value-neutral; it can be good or bad. In this sense, reputation must be distinguished from honor, which is, as Pat O'Malley argues, a specifically aristocratic concept.[20] Honor is a feature inherent in the (aristocratic) individual, but reputation is constructed by others. Only reputation -- that which the person is made out by others to be -- is protected by the law. This is because the law recognizes that reputation, unlike character, is subject to manipulation. Reputation, that is to say, is an aspect of the individual that resides only in the public sphere. The third-party construction of reputation makes it a public issue.

> For if reputation is theoretically a product of the individual's own character and deeds, it is also by definition [. . .] constituted through the discourse of others [. . .]. And it follows from the fact that reputations are given by public opinion that, justly or unjustly, they can also be taken away again. (Rigney 55)

The political and social purchase of reputation is visible in the work of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. In The Leviathan, Hobbes discusses the connection between power and reputation that underlies the scandalum magnatum statute. Reputation, he argues, is an "instrumental power," one that is used to acquire a future good. "Reputation of power is Power; because it draweth with it the adherence of those that need protection."[21] Reputation contributes to the construction of social hierarchies. Value, he argues, resides not in the person but in the estimation of that person by others: "For let a man (as most men do) rate

themselves at the highest value they can; yet their true Value is no more than it is esteemed by others" (I, ch 10). Reputation also functions as a way of controlling individual behavior because good action can come from the desire for praise and value: "Desire of Praise, disposeth to laudable action, such as please them whose judgment they value; for those men whom we contemn, we contemn also the Praises" (I, ch 11).

John Locke is less concerned with reputation's relationship to power than to the moral order. He argues that the "law or opinion or reputation" is one of three moral laws that guide human action, the other two being divine and civil law. The vice or virtue that this law judges, however, is socially contingent: "the measure of what is everywhere called and esteemed virtue and vice is this approbation or dislike, praise or blame, which by a secret and tacit consent, establishes itself in the several societies, tribes, and clubs of men in the world."[22]

The primary distinction drawn before the eighteenth century in defamation law was between the seditious and the non-seditious. These determinations were made according to whether the damage inflicted was of a public or private nature. Out of this came the conception of libel as a public wrong and slander as a private one. As H. Montgomery Hyde explains,

> Briefly, they [the differences in substance and procedure between slander and libel] stem from the fact that libel was originally regarded as a crime

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> regardless of its truth or falsity, and punishable by the King's courts, while slander, unless uttered about the sovereign or officials of the government, was treated as a private wrong primarily within the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, a jurisdiction which, though it became virtually obsolete by the beginning of the last century, was not formally abolished until 1855.[23]

The distinction between public and private began to change, however, and the view that a libel was public because it was about the government and slander private because it was against individuals was transformed through the spread of print. Writing against an individual was not a "private" matter when the charges themselves were made in the public realm of print. From the early seventeenth century, the courts were deluged by libel cases, as the government used the legal system to control the rapidly growing press and individuals began to rely on the courts rather than on duels to protect their names (Kropf 153).[24]

While the distinction between private and public pre-existed print culture, the meaning of privacy changed with the emerging notion of an intimate sphere. While "private" is etymologically derived from the same root as "deprivation" and first denoted lack of official office, it came to suggest a positive value: a state of intimacy and seclusion that can be violated by publicity. When individuals took legal action to protect "private" matters, this violation was the grounds of the objection, coupled with the effects of misrepresentation of that private self before the public. This dichotomous understanding of public

and private, fostered by the legal system, broke down in the conditions of print culture, as I will examine in chapter four.

In his history of English defamation law, nineteenth-century legal author Francis Ludlow Holt expresses concern about widespread publication and the legal protection of reputation. He presents reputation as one of the "rights of personal security" (32). The question that he then pursues is, did the invention of printing -- "a new and enlarged means of libel" (36) -- in any way change the legal view of libel? In other words, did the availability of print cause a change in the conception of "the rights of reputation" (36)? The answer that he arrives at is a resounding "no":

> When we have termed the press a new and enlarged instrument of publication, whether of good or evil, we have, in fact, pointed out that part of its nature which defines and circumscribes the law which attaches to it. The law of libel was not altered by the discovery of printing; nor is there any reason that it should be altered. The rights of personal reputation, and the rights of free discussion remained the same. Printing is but the mechanical art of extending such discussion into a wider sphere. It was a new power, but no new right. It left, therefore, everything as it found it, with the exception, that the acquisition of such power, and the greater facility of mischief demanded an increase of vigilance on the part of the law. (37)

So Holt sees two rights in competition -- the right of reputation and the right of free discussion. Printing expands gossip beyond the boundaries of any spoken conversation, and so makes possible the magnitude of

exposure that constitutes scandal. But, he argues, the right of discussion is in no way expanded by the change in the way that discussion itself can be conducted. In fact, Holt draws some very firm limits on the right of discussion, and sees discourse itself as an almost physical object to be controlled. While we are all at liberty to think as we will, he writes, we cannot say whatever we think:

> When these thoughts are embodied in words, they become in that shape moral substances; they produce palpable and material effects upon the personal rights of others [. . .]. In this shape, therefore, as being naturally capable of injury, they become cognizable by law. Writing is the further publication of words, as printing is the further publication of writing. They are all different forms of the same thing, namely, public speaking. (38)

While Holt sees words as mechanisms of production, he resists acknowledging the productive power of print, insisting instead that printing had "left [. . .] everything as it found it." This attitude in some ways mirrors that of Habermas, who conceives of print as a communicative venue, a "means for disseminating and sharing ideas, and not as an independent causal factor that shaped new modes of thought."[25]

The effects of print's abuse, Holt suggests, are grave. "The greatest injury which a citizen can suffer," he writes, "is such as affects his life or produces a bodily loss. The next injury is that which affects him in character" (49). The act of speaking against another is usurping the proper

authority of the law, a position frequently expressed in the debate over satire:

> As no man can individually assume to himself the power of administering justice, of trying, sentencing, and punishing offenders, so can no man likewise take upon himself to speak against those who seem to do ill; which is a sort of punishment, inflicting pain and damage upon the persons concerned. (50)

Ann Rigney argues that discrediting someone -- and thus lowering his or her symbolic value -- is the "foundation" of the right to social criticism. This is so because a person can enjoy a reputation that others do not feel the person deserves. The dilemma she sees, then, as does Holt, is this: "The problem for communities who recognize the right to fair comment is to fix on criteria with which to distinguish 'poison' from 'fair comment', and personal animosity from criticism, when they judge the acceptability of third-party communication" (57). This predicament, as we shall see, is precisely the issue that animates the debate over satire in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

**THE DEBATE OVER SATIRE**

Satire was an embattled genre in the eighteenth century. We today think of the period as the "great age" of satire, but at the time satire's status, purpose, and nature were matters of heated contention. The debate over satire that writers waged in the eighteenth century turned on a series of oppositions: whether satire should praise or

condemn, whether it should be gentle or biting, and, perhaps above all, whether it should be general or personal. This debate sprang up because the issue it addressed -- the fate of personal reputation in a print culture -- was already of significant concern. The positions that the participants in this debate took reflect both a sincere ethical dispute over the limits of satire and justifications of detraction, and a self-interested response to a new class of writers.

**The Contours of the Debate**

The standard eighteenth-century defense of satire was its efficacy as a moral tool. Satire, it was argued, exposes vice and folly to public view and (according to some models of satire) recommends and praises virtue. The satirist thus occupies a position of moral authority. The value of this moral mission was not contested; the question was whether or not satire delivered on its promise, and many held that it did not. Criticism of satire came from a variety of sources, and staked out a range of complaints. Among the dangers that its detractors identified were the following: that it could influence readers for good or ill; that it could injure the reputations of the innocent; that it could injure reputations even when well-intentioned; that its roots were in corruption and vice; that, by its nature, it must treat sordid and unpleasant topics; that it catered to the worst in human nature; and that the satirists themselves were malicious and envious, unfit to judge

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others.[26] The most common object of denouncement was personal satire.[27] General satire, it was argued, addresses vice and folly as abstract qualities; personal satire makes them concrete by locating them in the actions of real individuals. As such, personal satire was a threat to reputations in a way that general satire was not.

Personal satire became the crux of the satire debate. As P. K. Elkin notes, by the 1720s and 1730s, most attacks on satire focused on this form. When the Augustans defended satire generically, in other words, the defense they offered was usually of personal satire. It needed defending on several grounds. It was charged that personal satire was simply a means of exacting private revenge, and thus did not serve the public benefit that satire traditionally claimed. Critics held that such public humiliation could do irreparable harm to a person's reputation, and that innocent people could be hurt by an irresponsible satirist. Satire was upheld as a "lawful" form by John Dryden, among others; personal satire, with its free-for-all of charges and counter-charges, threatened lawlessness. The motives of the personal satirist were suspect; Elkin remarks that personal satire "usually carried with it associations of pettiness and malice" (123), and Joseph Addison, in Spectator 256, holds that defamatory writing is the product of jealousy, pride in one's power of discernment, vanity, or ostentatious display of wit.[28]

There is a recurrent argument that to accept the personal as the satiric is to misunderstand the meaning of satire. Charles Gildon makes this case in his Laws of Poetry (1721):

> Satire with us is taken to be something very malicious, sharp, and biting, something that consists wholly of invectives, and railing at particular persons; but in its original meaning among the Romans, where it had its first rise, it contained nothing of so virulent a nature; and this misunderstanding of the very name of the poem has with us made lampoons, or copies of verses stuft with scurrility and scandal, in the abuse of particulars, pass so currently for Satire, that the general readers have no other idea of that poem. A great deal of malice, and a little wit, without learning or any knowledge of human nature, fine sense, or reflection, sets up a very indifferent scribbler for a great performer in this kind [. . .].[29]

Gildon finally allows personal satire only on the condition that "the crimes and follies they charge any one with, must not only be absolutely true, but known to the public, and prejudicial to others, as well as ignominious to themselves; otherwise it is all libel, and what we call scandal, a task very unfit for a gentleman, or a man of probity"(145). Gildon's comment is telling on two grounds: it reveals the class dimensions of scandal -- it is beneath the pursuit of a gentleman -- and raises the issue of public exposure.

John Newbery's Art of Poetry on a New Plan (1761) takes a similar position: "In writing satire care should be taken that it be true and general, that is, levelled at abuses in which numbers are concerned; for the personal kind of

satire, or lampoon, which exposes particular characters, and affects the reputation of those at whom it is pointed, is scarce to be distinguished from scandal and defamation."[30]

The response from personal satire's defenders was that it was no less public-spirited than general satire, and they recommended it for its greater power of reform. In his Lectures on Poetry (1742), Joseph Trapp makes a pointed defense of "biting" satire: "But however various the Matter of [satire] is, it ought always to have somewhat of Keenness and Invective, to expose the Vices and Follies of Mankind with Raillery, or chastise them with severity."[31] He does not make a case for personal satire specifically, but his praise of exposure clearly lays a road for it. As Alexander Pope, who plays a complicated role in this debate, remarked:

> To attack Vice in the abstract, without touching Persons, may be safe fighting indeed, but it is fighting with Shadows. General propositions are obscure, misty, and uncertain, compar'd with plain, full, and home examples: Precepts only apply to our Reason, which in most men is but weak: Examples are pictures, and strike the Senses, may raise the Passions, and call in those (the strongest and most general of all motives) to the aid of reformation.[32]

Critic J. A. Richardson writes that personal satire attempts to "effect change by exploiting regard for reputation."[33] Here Pope disowns designs on reputation -- his real target is the vice, he maintains, not the individual. The discussion surrounding personal satire is almost always concerned with the morality of the enterprise.

Pope, in the extract above, takes the standard position of personal satire's defenders. It is, he explains, a moral form, more effectual than general satire because it steers the reader more forcefully by example. Proponents of general satire contend that the satirist has no purchase on another's reputation -- no social interest can outweigh the individual's interest in maintaining a "public Character" of high standing. Defenders of personal satire, contrastingly, argue that the interests of the community as a whole can claim priority over the individual's interest in a good reputation. That is to say, actions in the private life could bring negative consequences to bear on the community as a whole; therefore, it is in the public interest (which, according to this position, is of the highest value) to expose the individual.

One of the clearest delineations of the case against personal satire is found in Richard Allestree's Government of the Tongue (1713). In this lengthy treatise on the proper ends of speech, Allestree holds that all human communication must serve two purposes: "the glorifying of God and the benefiting of men."[34] Accordingly, detraction is one of the most serious and common of sins. He explains:

> Detraction in the native importance of the word signifies the withdrawing or taking off from a thing. And as it is apply'd to reputation, it denotes the impairing or lessening a man in point of fame, rendring him less valued and esteemed by others, which is the final aim of Detraction, tho' pursued by various means. (42)

Allestree's treatise falters on the ambiguities of defamation. Defamation, he writes, is a form of detraction, and exists in two forms: false and true. False defamation is, very simply, the circulation of lies -- or at least, the circulation of information the truth of which one cannot vouchsafe -- intended to diminish another. It is a moral crime of profound seriousness, Allestree writes: "Even in this age of insulting vice, when almost all other vice appears bare-faced, this is fain to keep on the vizard" (50).

The case against true defamation is more complicated. Allestree claims an essential similarity between true and false defamation: "tho' they may seem to be of very different complexions, yet [they] may spring from the same stock and drive at the same design" (49). Nonetheless, Allestree sees true defamation as a less sinful form of detraction, and owns that there can be circumstances under which defamation is not a sin at all:

> 'tho every discovery of anothers fault be in the strict natural sense of the word a Detraction, yet it will not always be the sin of Detraction, because in some instances there may be some higher obligation intervene, and supersede that we owe to the fame of our neighbor; and in those cases it may not only be lawful, but necessary to expose him. (63)

There are two such higher obligations, Allestree explains: justice and charity. The former, of course, is precisely the defense claimed by the personal satirists, and the fact that even Allestree grants the possible legitimacy

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of this position, while simultaneously delivering such a staunch indictment of slander and libel, indicates the deeply fraught nature of the debate over personal satire.

This ambivalence is also voiced in Dryden's Discourse on the Original and Progress of Satire, a central text in the debate over satire. While the Discourse has frequently been approached as the authoritative articulation of the eighteenth-century view of satire, Dustin Griffin rightly argues that this both misreads the Discourse and obscures the plurality of positions on satire in the period. As he remarks, "Dryden's Discourse [. . .] was not simply an objective and reliable summary of late Renaissance or neoclassical theory; it joined a lively controversy and took a partisan position."[35] Like Allestree, Dryden takes a position firmly in opposition to the lampoon, but in his discussion, he betrays the ambiguity of his own views, first excusing and then excoriating lampoon, justifying his own inclinations to write against others, portraying his battle against these inclinations as a heroic moral struggle, and finally displacing the production of lampoon onto the body of "scriblers" and excising the lampoon from the genre of satire altogether.

Dryden argues that satire is, at its roots, defamation, but that this wild origin has been tamed by satire's cultivation as an art. Dryden's position, Griffin argues, is progressive: Dryden wants to establish the acceptance of satire as an art, and he wants to argue that the history of

satire is a history of improvement (18). "If we take Satire in the general signification of the Word," Dryden writes, "as it is us'd in all Modern Languages, for an Invective, 'tis certain that it is almost as old as Verse; and tho' Hymns, which are praises of God, may be allow'd to have been before it, yet the defamation of others was not long after it."[36] This origin, he notes ruefully, "is not much to the Honour of Satire; but here it was Nature, and that deprav'd: When it became an Art, it bore better Fruit" (28). For Dryden, the conundrum is personal satire, a form that takes satire dangerously close to its roots, and yet is a form that he cannot entirely dismiss, either. Edward P. Nathan describes Dryden as "an apologist for personal satire," a label that oversimplifies Dryden's complex reaction to the dilemma of personal satire.[37] Dryden argues that personal satire is generally "unlawful" because of the harm it does to reputations: "that former sort of Satire, which is known in England by the Name of Lampoon, is a dangerous sort of Weapon, and for the most part Unlawful. We have no Moral right on the Reputation of other Men. 'Tis taking from them, what we cannot restore to them" (59).

Dryden's response to personal satire as an unlawful act is complicated by his belief that it can be justified under two circumstances: revenge and the public good. In the case of the former, Dryden's discussion of personal satire becomes itself strikingly personal -- he reveals his own inward struggle between his sense of Christian duty and his

desire to protect himself as a public man (not, significantly, as a poet). It is a passage that must be quoted at length to capture Dryden's labyrinthine reflections:

> The first [justification] is Revenge, when we have been affronted in the same Nature, or have been any ways notoriously abus'd, and can make our selves no other Reparation. And yet we know, that, in Christian Charity, all Offences are to be forgiven; as we expect the like pardon for those which we daily commit against Almighty God. And this Consideration has often made me tremble when I was saying our Saviour's Prayer; for the plain Condition of the forgiveness which we beg, is the pardoning of others the Offences which they have done to us: For which Reason I have many times avoided the Commission of that Fault' ev'n when I have been notoriously provok'd. Let not this, my Lord, pass for Vanity in me: For 'tis truth. More Libels have been written against me, than almost any Man now living; And I had Reason on my side, to have defended my own Innocence: I speak not of my Poetry, which I have wholly given up to the Criticism; let them use it, as they please; Posterity, perhaps, may be more favourable to me: For Interest and Passion, will lye bury'd in another Age: And Partiality and Prejudice be forgotten. I speak of my Morals, which have been sufficiently aspers'd: That only sort of Reputation ought to be dear to every honest Man, and is to me. But let the World witness for me, that I have been often wanting to my self in that particular: I have seldom answer'd any scurrilous Lampoon; When it was in my power to have expos'd my Enemies: And being naturally vindicative, have suffer'd in silence, and possess'd my Soul in quiet. (59-60)

When Dryden turns to the second justification of personal satire, he simultaneously asserts its necessity for the public good and the unfitness of most of his contemporaries to fulfill this public responsibility, one that he calls "absolutely of a Poet's office to perform":

"'Tis an Action of Virtue to make Examples of vicious Men. They may and ought to be upbraided with their Crimes and Follies: Both for their own amendment, if they are not yet incorrigible; and for the Terrour of others, to hinder them from falling into those Enormities, which they see are so severely punish'd, in the Persons of others" (61).

Nathan argues that Dryden's rationale for personal satire is a civic, collectivist one -- the good of the group is met by the exposure of the individual. This imperative, however, contradicts Dryden's religious values: "Dryden's Christianity will not tolerate the abuse of a man's reputation" (376). While Nathan's reading is sensitive to the genuine ethical dilemma that Dryden faces in ad hominem attack, Nathan misses the print culture context that also surrounds Dryden's tribulations. His misgivings about scandal come not just from his worries about religious offense, but from his association of that writing with another class of writers.

This sentiment is reiterated in Dryden's dedication to his patron, the Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, whom he summons to publication as a way of silencing the "Scriblers." He suggests their perniciousness while denying their influence:

> indeed, a provocation is almost necessary, in behalf of the World, that you might be induc'd sometimes to write; and in relation to a multitude of Scriblers, who daily pester the World with their insufferable Stuff, that they might be discourag'd from Writing any more. I complain not of their Lampoon, and Libels, though I have been

> the Public Mark for many years. I am vindictive enough to have repell'd by force, if I cou'd imagine that any of them had ever reach'd me; but they either shot at Rovers, and therefore miss'd, or their Powder was so weak, that I might safely stand them, at the nearest distance. (8)

The theory that Dryden propounds, Griffin argues, is one intended to win acceptance for satire as a genre, in part through the prescriptive rules he produces. And yet he is remaking satire, and thereby ignoring or ruling out much writing that already existed: "Lampoon, in Dryden's scheme, is likewise exiled beyond the pale as a lawless and dangerous kind of poem" (22).

The journals The Tatler and The Spectator also propounded satiric theory. In the Spectator, personal satire is depicted as a symptom of class envy: "A Satyr or Libel on one of the common Stamp, never meets with that Reception or Approbation among its Readers, as what is aimed at a Person whose Merit places him upon an Eminence, and gives him a more conspicuous Figure among Men" (1: 494). The Spectator, the periodical announces, contains "no private Scandal, nor any thing that may tend to the Defamation of particular Persons, Families, or Societies" (1: 517).

To produce scandal, the Spectator argues, is to infringe on the territory of the court system: "I cannot but look upon the finest Strokes of Satyr which are aimed at particular Persons, and which are supported even with the Appearance of Truth, to be the Marks of an evil Mind, and

highly Criminal in themselves. Infamy, like other Punishments, is under the direction and distribution of the Magistrate, and not of any private Person" (1: 88).

The attitude expressed in The Tatler is more complicated. In August of 1709, Steele put forward a limited justification of personal satire:

> It is a common Objection against Writings of a Satyrical Mixture, that they hurt Men in their Reputations, and consequently in their Fortunes and Possessions; but a Gentleman who frequents this Room declar'd, he was of Opinion it ought to be so, provided such Performances had their proper Restrictions.[38]

He goes on to praise the capacity of satire to allot justice extralegally: "The greatest evils in human Society are such as no Law can come at" (1: 420). The example Steele cites is of an ungrateful benefactee and promises that "[w]e shall therefore take it for a very moral Action to find a good Appellation for Offenders, and to turn 'em into Ridicule under feign'd Names" (1: 421).

In an issue of The Tatler from the autumn of the same year, however, Steele rails against the idea of public exposure. The disjuncture can perhaps be explained by the fact that, in the later issue, Steele envisions publicity unharnessed from "proper Restriction." The public culture is suddenly mass culture:

> we reject many eminent Virtues, if they are accompanied with one apparent weakness. The reflecting after this Manner, made me account for the strange Delight Men take in reading Lampoons and Scandal, with which the Age abounds, and of which I receive frequent Complaints. Upon mature Consideration, I find it is principally for this

> Reason, that the worst of Mankind, the Libellers, receive so much Encouragement in the World. The low Race of Men take a secret Pleasure in finding an eminent Character levelled to their Condition by a Report of its Defects, and keep themselves in Countenance, though they are excelled in a thousand Virtues, if they believe they have in common with a great Person any one Fault. The Libeller falls in with this Humour, and gratifies this Baseness of Temper, which is naturally an Enemy to extraordinary Merit. It is from this that Libel and Satyr are promiscuously joined together in the Notions of the Vulgar, though the Satyrist and Libeller differ as much as the Magistrate and the Murderer. (2: 74)

The vision of print culture that Steele summons is one of order turned upside down. The "low Race of Men" are assuming cultural authority and, he argues, it is his duty to contribute to the effort to control them:

> I shall, for the Good of my Country, hereafter take upon me to punish these Wretches [. . .]; for the future, I shall take Notice of such Enemies to Honour and Virtue, and preserve them to immortal Infamy. Their Names shall give fresh Offence many Ages hence, and be detested a Thousand Years after Commission of their Crime. (2: 75-76)

The undercurrent of the debate over satire is clear. Reputation is increasingly important, it is in the hands of the masses, and the politics of exposure are highly charged.

No writer was more definitively marked as an agent of exposure or producer of scandal than Delarivier Manley. In the introduction to the second volume of her <u>New Atalantis</u>, Manley appropriates Dryden's and Steele's arguments to defend the practice of personal satire.

> Were not the scene of these memoirs in an island with which those of ours are but little acquainted, I should, my Lord, say something in the defence of them as they seem guilty of

> particular reflections, defending the author by the precedent of our great forefathers in satire, who not only flew against the general reigning vices but pointed at individual persons, as may be seen in Ennius, Varro, Lucian, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, &c. What would have become of the immortality they have derived from their works, if their contemporaries had been of the Tatler's opinion? Who, though he allows ingratitude, avarice, and those other vices which the law does not reach to be the business of satire yet, in another place he says, these are his words, <u>That where the crimes are enormous, the delinquent deserves little pity, but the reporter less</u>. At this rate, vice may stalk an noon, secure from reproach, and the reformer skulk as if he were performing an inglorious as well as ingrateful office.[39]

Delarivier Manley's work brings together the issues of publicity and privacy with an insistence that made her a particularly controversial figure in her day. She simultaneously evokes a tradition of personal writing and leads her readers to question the compatibility of this tradition with the new conditions of the public sphere. Her texts, as I will argue in the next chapter, helped to define that sphere.

NOTES

[1] Joseph Addison, The Spectator, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965) 2: 518.

[2] See W. R. Jones, "'Actions for Slaunder': Defamation in English Law, Language, and History," Quarterly Journal of Speech 57 (1971): 275; and R. C. Donnelly, "History of Defamation," Wisconsin Law Review (1949): 106.

[3] Theodore F. T. Plucknett, "A Concise History of the Common Law," 5th ed., vol. 2 (Boston: Little Brown, 1956) 484.

[4] For a discussion of court treatment of slander in London in the first half of the eighteenth century, with particular reference to gender, see Tim Meldrum, "A Women's Court in London: Defamation at the Bishop of London's Consistory Court, 1700-1745," London Journal 19 (1994): 1-20. See also Laura Gowing, "Language, Power and the Law: Women's Slander Litigation in Early Modern London," Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England, ed. Jennifer Kermode and Garthine Walker (Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 1994) 26-47.

[5] Statutes of Westminster I (1275): c. 34.

[6] Francis Ludlow Holt, The Law of Libel (1812; New York: Garland, 1978) 25.

[7] Paul Hyland and Neil Sammells, eds., Writing and Censorship in Britain (New York: Routledge, 1992) 15.

[8] Lawrence H. Eldgredge, The Law of Defamation (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1978) 5.

[9] C. R. Kropf, "Libel and Satire in the Eighteenth Century," Eighteenth-Century Studies 8 (1974/75): 158.

[10] Fredrick Seaton Siebert, Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1776 (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1965) 119.

[11] John March, Actions for Slander (London, 1647) 10-11.

[12] For discussion of Areopagitica and the emerging figure of the author, see Abbe Blum, "The Author's Authority: Areopagitica and the Labour of Licensing," Re-membering Milton, ed. Mary Nyquist and Margaret Ferguson (London: Methuen, 1987) 74-96.

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[13] See Laurence Hanson, Government and the Press, 1665-1763, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967) 15.

[14] For the history of the Licensing Act, see Terry Belanger, "Publishers and Writers in Eighteenth-Century England," Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England, ed. Isabel Rivers (London: St. Martin's, 1982) 5-26.

[15] M. Lindsay Kaplan, "The Poetics of Defamation in Early Modern England," EMF: Studies in Early Modern France, ed. David Lee Rubin, vol. 2 (Charlottesville, VA: Rookwood P, 1996) 116. See also Kaplan, The Culture of Slander in Early Modern England (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).

[16] Patricia Meyer Spacks, Gossip (New York: Knopf, 1985) 31.

[17] Van Vechten Veeder, "The History and Theory of the Law of Defamation," Columbia Law Review 4 (1904): 31.

[18] Ann Rigney, "Fame and Defamation: Towards a SocioPragmatics," Semiotica 99 (1994): 54.

[19] Walter Probert, "Defamation, a Camoflauge of Psychic Interests: The Beginning of a Behavioral Analysis," Vanderbilt Law Review 5 (1962): 1176.

[20] Pat O'Malley, "From Feudal Honour to Bourgeois Reputation: Ideology, Law and the Rise of Industrial Capitalism," Sociology: The Journal of the British Sociological Association 15 (1981): 80.

[21] Thomas Hobbes, The Leviathan I, ch. 10.

[22] John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding II.28.sec 10.

[23] H. Montgomery Hyde, "A Look at the Law," Wicked, Wicked Libels, ed. Michael Rubinstein (London: Routledge, 1972) 5.

[24] On the development of public insult as a means of settling conflict, see Robert B. Shoemaker, "Reforming Male Manners: Public Insult and the Decline of Violence in London, 1660-1740," English Masculinities, 1660-1800, ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (New York: Longman, 1999): 133-50.

[25] David Zaret, "Religion, Science, and Printing in the

Public Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England," Habermas and the Public Sphere, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MIT P, 1997) 214. On the relation between print and the emerging public sphere, see also Michael Warner, The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990).

[26] P. K. Elkin, The Augustan Defence of Satire (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973) 44-45.

[27] For general discussions of reading personal satire, see R. B. Gill, "Dryden, Pope and the Person in Personal Satire," Essays in Literature 13 (1986): 219-30; and "Real People and Persuasion in Personal Satire," The South Atlantic Quarterly 82 (1983): 165-78.

[28] The Spectator 2: 495.

[29] Charles Gildon, The Laws of Poetry (London, 1721) 127.

[30] John Newbery, The Art of Poetry on a New Plan (London, 1761) 100.

[31] Joseph Trapp, Lectures on Poetry, ed. Malcolm Kesall (1742; Menston, Eng.: The Scholar Press, 1973) 221.

[32] Alexander Pope, "Letter to Arbuthnot, 26 July 1734," The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, ed. George Sherbun (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956) 3: 419.

[33] J. A. Richardson, "Swift: Personal Satire, Reputation and the Reader," English Studies 5 (1987): 433.

[34] Richard Allestree, The Government of the Tongue (London, 1713) 6.

[35] Dustin Griffin, Satire: A Critical Reintroduction (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1994) 16.

[36] Dryden, Original and Progress of Satire in The Works of John Dryden, vol. 4, ed. A. B. Chambers and William Frost (Berkeley: U of California P, 1974) 28.

[37] Edward P. Nathan, "The Bench and the Pulpit: Conflicting Elements in the Augustan Apology for Satire," ELH 52 (1985): 375.

[38] The Tatler, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) 1: 420.

[39] Delariver Manley, The New Atalantis, ed. Ros Ballaster (1709; New York: Penguin, 1991) 132.

## CHAPTER TWO

## THE POLITICS OF EXPOSURE IN THE WORK OF DELARIVIER MANLEY

Implicit in the exposure of public figures that Delarivier Manley justifies in the preface to volume II of her New Atalantis is a redistribution of authority. Rank is no longer sufficient to secure a position of public influence. Transformations in social ideology in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Britain invested a special public value in the enterprise of scandal. Amidst significant unease about profitable detraction and disruptions of the social order, private character became an important element of political, social and cultural authority. "Over the course of the seventeenth century," Michael McKeon has observed, "the predominant meaning of the word 'honor' as a term of denotation shifts from 'title of rank' to 'goodness of character.'"[1] Character was held to manifest itself in private (that is to say, undisplayed) actions; private life was thus a matter of public concern. This is the claim made by some defenders of personal satire, who argued that the public benefited when examples of individual vice were brought to its attention. Self-proclaimed satirists positioned satire as an authorized genre, a counterpart to the law in punishing bad actions and protecting the public interest; as such, they distinguished it from libel, which, they contended, wantonly destroyed

reputations. The boundary between satire and libel was an unstable one, and satire's advocates found themselves having continually to assert and re-assert difference. The contrast with libel afforded satire some legitimacy, as Manley acknowledges when she deliberately situates her New Atalantis in the history of personal satire. Such tactics, however, did not protect Manley from the imputations of being a scandal writer, and she herself was absorbed into the economy of scandal that she advanced with her texts. In her Adventures of Rivella, a disguised autobiographical account of her life, Manley enters into the process of representation on her own behalf. Rather than presenting a straight-forward self-defense, Manley provides an impression of exposure: a scandal narrative about her life, which she did not acknowledge as her own text. In writing The Adventures of Rivella, Manley depicts the process of having one's private life represented for the public eye. She intervenes in the exchange of scandal to offer a self-representation, but in doing so, she emphasizes the power of writing to produce rather than reveal a life.[2]

The New Atalantis (1709) is a text about fame and notoriety that was a seminal factor in making Manley herself a public entity. She had published before, as a playwright and as a scandal memoirist. But it was the astounding popularity of The New Atalantis that transformed Manley into a truly public figure. Delarivier Manley began her literary career in the 1690s as a playwright, but by the early years

of the eighteenth century, she was working for the Tory party and had taken up writing scandal narratives. The genre had its roots in France, in the chroniques scandaleuses that developed around 1660. These texts, which related the events of real private lives, found popularity in England, and many French scandal chronicles were translated for an English audience.[3] Aphra Behn was perhaps the earliest English scandal writer; Memoirs of the Dutchess of Mazarine (1676) and Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister (1684-87) are examples of the form.[4] Manley's narratives put scandal to more overtly political use. Her first was The Secret History of Queen Zarah and the Zarazians (1705), a satirical roman à clef about Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough and Whig confidante of Queen Anne. Manley followed this with her most popular work, The New Atalantis, the central target of which is John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough. In these scandal narratives, Manley blends amatory fiction and political exposé as she relates compromising stories about the lives of influential Whigs.

Manley's ability to manipulate renown and reputation for political ends is in keeping with the changes wrought by political events in the seventeenth century. In his book, The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History, Leo Braudy notes the new fluidity of political power. The restoration of Charles II and the 1688 Revolution that removed James II from the throne to be replaced by William III were the will

of the "majority of the politically aware and powerful." Honor and value were newly malleable: "Medieval imagery had made fame the often arbitrary gift of fortune. But with the new political and legal awareness of the late Renaissance, what had been seen as a gamble on the Wheel of Fortune became something to learn about and manipulate."[5] Manley's New Atalantis is one form of such manipulation. The public for which she wrote was likely still a fairly constricted circle. Nevertheless, it extended considerably beyond king and court to encompass a larger reading public. In "The Rape of the Lock," for example, Pope's reference to The New Atalantis ("As long as Atalantis shall be read"), intended to evoke ephemerality, also suggests the text's popularity.[6]

As I have argued, scandal, like gossip, involves the circulation of damaging stories about others' private lives. While gossip itself is part of a private sphere, scandal moves the activity of gossip into open view. Delarivier Manley writes about the most influential individuals of her society. In The New Atalantis, she depicts such socially prominent figures as: Earl Godolphin; the Duke of Leeds; the Earl of Berkeley; the Marquis and Marchioness Wharton; Catherine Tufton and Elizabeth Montagu, daughters of the Duke of Newcastle; the Duke of Kent; Thomas, Earl Coningsby, and Frances, Countess Scudamore. Knowledge of intimate stories about such lofty individuals as those represented in The New Atalantis would, without Manley, have been confined largely to other members of their circle.[7] Indeed, the

staid but authoritative Dictionary of National Biography upbraids Manley for The New Atalantis, stating that in it, she "impudently slandered many persons of note, especially those of whiggish proclivities."[8] The adverb is important -- Manley's crime is not simply that she slanders, but that she does so from the position of a social inferior. So Catherine Gallagher observes when she comments that Delarivier Manley represents the "scandal of scandal: affront to propriety offered by the public discrediting of people in authority."[9] Their power, in other words, should make them immune to public attack, yet it is their very proximity to the public good that Manley cites in her autobiography, The Adventures of Rivella, as a justification for her scandal writing. Authority itself is redistributed as these public figures become accountable to a broad public and its evaluations of their private conduct.

In this respect, Manley's writing expands on three fronts the boundaries of an already existing economy of gossip: she draws into the realm of public gossip the private lives of privileged figures; she absorbs politics into this economy; and she makes people of her rank significant participants in its workings. Information is the currency in this economy; reputation is each participant's capital. One accrues power through the tactical revelation of information about others, not just because that information establishes special knowledge, but also because that information can be used to discredit the

object of gossip. Those who inspire gossip are vulnerable to the circulation of slander, the betrayal of secrets, and the penetration of privacy.[10] Reputation is both a potential defense against gossip (a good reputation may sustain relatively little damage from accusations hurled against it) and that which is at risk from gossip. The reputation of the gossiper is also a crucial factor in this economy, for personal credibility is essential to the influence of the gossip that is spread. Janet Todd argues that Rivella had its genesis in Manley's recognition that, as an infamous woman, she had nothing left to lose: in Rivella, "the reader learns that a woman without reputation and honour may be freed for economic activity."[11] (Actually, Manley is not "without reputation"; rather, the reputation she has is of a woman "without honour.") But while the very act of publishing imperils Manley's reputation, and the writing of scandal narratives mars it still further, some measure of good reputation and honor is required for Manley's "economic activity." Her scandal writing will be without effect if she herself has no public credibility, and the authority she has gained will be lost. This is why Manley must intervene on her own behalf in the economy of gossip. Rivella is that intervention.

The very fact that subjects of gossip are worthy of public discussion signals their influence, and in this sense gossip acknowledges authority even as it assaults its legitimacy.[12] Paradoxically, through her charges of others'

scandal, Delarivier Manley raises her own public notoriety, a double-edged sword. Her status is enhanced by this notoriety; it is an acknowledgment that she wields genuine power. Manley becomes a kind of peer of the influential figures about whom she writes in that she, too, becomes a subject of gossip. At the same time, she becomes vulnerable in just the way that the targets of her own scandal narratives are: her life becomes something that can be used against her. The material with potential to be exploited included her bigamous marriage to her guardian and cousin, John Manley; her relationships with Sir Thomas Skipworth and the married warden of Fleet Street Prison, John Tilly; and her years of living with the publisher John Barber.

In introducing gossip as political discourse, Manley brings what was traditionally seen as a form of private, female exchange into the public, male world of politics.[13] Patricia Meyer Spacks identifies three sources for the historical association of gossip with women: Eve's "unwise speaking and unwise listening"; the presumed feebleness of women's minds that would prevent them from comprehending and discussing matters of consequence; and, an explanation that emerged around Manley's day, that women gossip because, lacking any consequential business, they have nothing else to occupy them (41). It is an irony of Manley's work that she puts this gossip into service as a way of asserting a female voice in the affairs of state.[14] On one hand, that she would do so confirms in some of her critics' minds

misogynistic notions about women's involvement in public life (i.e. that Manley infects public discourse with the gossip that women engage in privately). On the other hand, the very effectiveness of her New Atalantis in discrediting those about whom she writes demonstrates the power of gossip as a form of political propaganda. It could not be dismissed as a woman's misplaced effort to enter the field of debate because it was one factor in changing the nature of that field, as the scandal chronicle drew private peccadilloes into the realm of the politically consequential. Gossip was employed by both sides, Whig and Tory, and as Rivella itself testifies, it became an important weapon to be used against Manley.

Gossip is the private made public, the "social appropriation of personal knowledge," as Clare Brant terms it.[15] When Manley publishes her scandal, she mirrors this process of publicizing the private. Spacks writes approvingly of the "bonding of gossip," the intimacy and social connection that it established and enforced in the exchange of information between two individuals. Manley's scandal involves no such intimacy, however, because it is immediately available to anyone able to read it. She also draws back the curtain from women's private communication, through the characters of Intelligence and especially Mrs. Nightwork. If spoken gossip's effect is incremental, as a story is spread from person to person, then the scandal narrative is a form of gossip distinctive for its instant

effect. This therefore makes it a particularly potent way of influencing reputation.

The vital thing to remember about Manley's scandal narratives is that they function on two levels: as amatory fiction and as public attacks on real-life individuals. In The New Atalantis, for example, she chronicles the rise to royal favor of Count Fortunatus through his affair with the Duchess de l'Inconstant. It is in fact the story of the Duke of Marlborough's relationship with Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland and mistress to Charles II:

> [The Duchess] caused [Fortunatus] to be called, and all full of native love and high desire, for an object so entirely new and charming, she bid him attend her after the King's couchée, who that night was to lie of his own side. The governess knowing the Duchess's amorous star, was transported at the happy introduction of her nephew, not doubting that he was destined for her peculiar pleasures; she caused him to bath in the Duchess's bathing-room, perfumes being than [sic] much worn by people of condition, she procured him the riches, scented his fine linen, and all sweet and charming as an Adonis, introduced him to the bed-side of the expecting Venus.[16]

In Manley's hands the scandal narrative becomes a tool of political influence, rather than merely a voyeuristic diversion. In this scene, Marlborough is both the innocent beneficiary of his aunt's machinations and the subject of Manley's scandalous representation. Nonetheless, this scene, which marks a literal rite of passage in Marlborough's education as a courtier also sets him on the road that will lead him to Blenheim Palace. When she puts forward for public consideration stories illustrating

Marlborough's greed, deceitfulness, and unscrupulous ambition, she assaults his public standing as a national hero. While treated as a suspect form of political propaganda, the scandal narrative was an apparently effective one, for The New Atalantis was an important element in the propaganda war that ended in the Tories taking power from the Whigs in 1710.[17]

In the atmosphere of the early eighteenth century, any woman imperiled her reputation by becoming a published author because she thereby eluded the boundaries of the private sphere to which virtuous women were confined.[18] Manley made herself more scandalous by writing scenes of passion and seduction rather than morally didactic works. In her scandal narratives, however, the amatory functions as a screen for the scandalous.[19] The purpose of the passionately-rendered scene in which Fortunatus and Germanicus play a bed-trick on the Duchess de l'Inconstant, for example, is not simply to titillate readers but to demonstrate the calculating ambition in Marlborough that prompts him to dispose in this way of his now-unwanted lover. It was this exposure of others in The New Atalantis that prompted The Tatler to publish a satirical reflection on the influence of Manley's work.[20] The author imagines a "College for Young Damsels" at which the students will study subjects (mathematics, Greek, Latin, etc.) ordinarily reserved for men:

> Only on Holydays the Students will, for moderate

> Exercise, be allow'd to divert themselves with the Use of some of the lightest and most voluble Weapons; and proper Care will be taken to give them at least a superficial Tincture of the Ancient and Modern Amazonian Tackticks. Of these Military Performances, the Direction is undertaken by Epicene [Manley], the writer of Memoirs from the Mediterranean, who, by the Help of some artificial Poisons convey'd by Smells, has within these few Weeks brought many Persons of both Sexes to an untimely Fate; and, what is more surprising, has contrary to her Profession, with the same Odors, reviv'd others who had long since been drown'd in the Whirlpools of Lethe.[21]

These remarks demonstrate the distaste with which Manley's work was received and the effort to paint it as inconsequential ("the lightest and most voluble Weapons") even while lamenting its results. The Amazonian context in which the author sets his scene testifies to a preoccupation with Manley's gender as a political writer. Her amatory fiction harmed only her own reputation as a virtuous woman; her scandal narratives damaged the reputations of others, as this evocation of literal character assassination makes clear. It is this latter damage that prompts retribution against her. In light of the effect of Manley's text on the Whig party, the Whig government responded swiftly to the publication of the second volume of The New Atalantis, arresting Manley on the charge of libel in October 1709. The effort to thwart her work was not limited to such legal pursuit, however; it also involved discounting her narrative authority by making public the private embarrassments of her own life. The logic was simple. To expose Manley was to discredit her work, to blunt the effects of her charges of

scandal, and to strike a blow against the enterprise of scandal writing itself. An attack on Manley was thus an attack on scandal; in silencing her, the threat to public authority that her narratives represented would be contained. Manley became, in other words, an embodiment of her work; she was scandal made immanent.[22]

It is this knotting together of author and work that Manley is concerned with in The Adventures of Rivella. As a scandalous woman -- that is to say, a woman whose work is bound up in the enterprise of scandal and who is publicly accepted as a figure of scandal -- a treatment of her life necessarily functions as a scandal narrative. This is not because of her sexual past, as April London argues, but because she is already part of the economy of gossip. Her past is ammunition in scandalous attack, but it is not the reason for that attack. It is her own scandal writing that prompts the will to discredit her. And yet, that attack will fail if Manley can persuade Rivella's audience that the scandalous behavior attributed to her is in fact insignificant.

One of the most interesting aspects of the history of this work is that it had its start, not in Manley's hands, but in those of writer Charles Gildon. In his preface to the edition issued some ten years after Rivella first appeared, publisher Edmund Curll claimed that Gildon wrote "upon a Pique, the cause of which I cannot assign."[23] Another, less personal, motive for writing also suggests

itself: while Manley was in the service of the Tories, Gildon was employed by the Whigs.[24] No more than the first two pages of Gildon's text were ever printed, however. Upon hearing of its impending publication, Manley rushed to Curll and appealed to him that she be allowed to tell her own story. Her urgency was born, Curll explains, of her "suspecting [Gildon's text] to be what it really was, a severe Invective upon some Part of her Conduct."[25] Curll presents the ensuing negotiations as harmonious and generous-spirited:

> upon hearing her own Story, which no Pen, but her own, can relate in the agreeable Manner wherein she delivered it, I promised to write to Mr. Gildon the next Day: and not only obtained his Consent to let Mrs. Manley see what Sheets were printed, but also brought them to an Interview, by which Means, all Resentments between them were thoroughly reconciled. Mr. Gildon was, likewise, so generous, as to order a Total Suppression of all his Papers, and Mrs. Manley, as generously resolved to write The History of her Own Life and Times, under the same Title which Mr. Gildon had made Choice of. (45)

Curll's picture of easy collegiality is undercut by the very evidence that he himself cites in support of his account: the letters Manley wrote to him. She is clearly anxious about the enterprise, and pleads with Curll that her authorship should be concealed: "for God's sake let us try if this Affair can be kept a Secret." She later adds, "I dread the Noise 'twill make when it comes out; it concerns us all to keep the Secret" (46). Gildon's Rivella is retaliatory gossip about Manley. If it should become known that the writer of The Adventures of Rivella is not Gildon

but Manley herself, then its status as gossip evaporates, possibly inviting Gildon or another to write a genuine exposure of Manley. Her eager acceptance of Gildon's title makes sense in this light: it further obscures her responsibility for the text.

Thus, while Gildon's reasons for retreating from the project are unclear, the implications of his involvement for Manley's Rivella are profound: whatever account she gives of herself is checked by the awareness that, while she writes to avert Gildon's "invective," too flattering a portrait of herself may only prompt Gildon to resume his work. Her solution to this dilemma is a clever one: she shifts her narrative lens from her own life to the desire of others to learn about that life. Rivella is less a portrait of Delarivier Manley than it is of her public representation.

The Adventures of Rivella is a complicated text because it must offer an account of Manley's life that is favorable enough to protect her reputation and yet critical enough not to announce itself as the product of her own pen. She must convince her audience that it is reading a scandal narrative, and she does this through her use of scandal narrative conventions and her revelation of scandal in a way that only appears harmful. The frames of her narrative are central to this effect. The first frame is a brief preface from its fictional translator, describing the origins of the work: on a visit to his uncle, the French ambassador to England, the young Chevalier D'Aumont converses with Sir

Charles Lovemore on the subject of Rivella. Eager to give Lovemore "Proof both of the goodness of his memory, and Great Attention," D'Aumont decides to translate Lovemore's spoken narration into written form.[26] Soon after his return to France, however, D'Aumont dies of a fever. His former servant, now a printer, inherits and publishes the papers, which are subsequently translated into English. A private conversation becomes a public document, in a self-conscious reflection of both the practice and the nature (the private made public) of Manley's other works. This frame announces to readers familiar with the conventions of scandal narrative that the text before them is another of that genre.

D'Aumont's plea to Lovemore to tell him about Rivella is the other frame of Lovemore's own narration. D'Aumont, who has read The New Atalantis, wants to hear all about this "Mistress of the Art of Love" (742). In D'Aumont, Manley dramatizes one way of reading her scandal narratives: as purely fictional scenes of seduction. He is oblivious to the political import of the writing, telling Lovemore that no one can match "your famous Author of the Atalantis" when it comes to "treat[ing] well of Love" (740). D'Aumont's reaction to her work is one of enthusiastic arousal:

> She has carried the Passion farther than could be readily conceiv'd: Her Germanicus on the Embroider'd Bugle Bed, naked out of the Bath: -- Her Young and innocent Charlot, transported with the powerful Emotion of a just kindling Flame, sinking with Delight and Shame upon the Bosom of her Lover in the Gallery of Books: Chevalier

> Tomaso dying at the Feet of Madam de Bedamore, and afterwards possessing Her in that Sylvan Scene of Pleasure the Garden; are such Representatives of Nature, that must warm the coldest Reader [. . .]. (740)

D'Aumont reads the characters as representatives, but of types, not of real individuals. Because D'Aumont fails to see behind the scandal narrative's fictional curtain, the seduction scenes carry for him only an exemplary significance: "After perusing [Rivella's] Inchanting Description, which of us have not gone in Search of Raptures which she every where tells us, as happy Mortals, we are capable of tasting" (740). These raptures, D'Aumont concludes, are best met in the person of Rivella herself. "Do her eyes love as well as Her Pen?" he beseeches Lovemore.[27] D'Aumont reads Rivella's narratives as amorous only, and then conflates the author with her work. She is for D'Aumont the embodiment of eroticism, just as Manley was for others the very personification of scandal.

If D'Aumont reads Rivella as the playful writer of amatory fiction, Lovemore is fully aware of the political purpose of her work. While Manley's invention of a male narrator for her story has received comment from many of her critics, only Ros Ballaster has treated the relationship between Lovemore and Rivella at length. She argues that "Lovemore struggles throughout the novella to contain Rivella within the private sphere he considers proper to the woman," but that Manley herself has the last laugh, for the Rivella he describes is only his own fantasy, and "[w]hile

the man appears to have 'authored' the perfect female object, she is, in reality, elsewhere 'authoring' him."[28] Ballaster's reading of the narrator is compelling as far as it goes, but she gives little attention to Lovemore's avowed purpose in his narration or the ways in which his real project is revealed. Lovemore has known Rivella for virtually the whole of her life, and promises D'Aumont that he will deliver to him an authoritative account of her life. Lovemore prides himself "Upon the Reputation of an Impartial Historian" (789), but the preoccupation that shapes his narrative soon becomes clear: Rivella once spurned him as a lover. His constant rehearsal of this rejection places him in an often censorious, and sometimes adversarial, position. He departs from fulfilling D'Aumont's narrative desires in order to satisfy his own: to show Rivella as a woman ultimately undone by her rebuff of him. Lovemore's claim to impartiality collapses, then, in the revelation of his self-serving narrative end. His oration on Rivella's conduct exposes itself as jealous gossip.

While Manley gives Lovemore the task of tracing Rivella's ruin, the events that he presents are scarcely scathing accusations. Rivella's scandalous reputation, Lovemore asserts, is the result of misfortune and folly. He cites her bigamous marriage (by referring D'Aumont to the story of Delia in The New Atalantis, thus reminding D'Aumont of the referential nature of that work) as her greatest source of misery and ill fortune.[29] Most of the damage done

to Rivella's name has come, however, from her own failure to guard her reputation. He comments, for example, that after the production of Rivella's first dramatic tragedy, "another wrong step toward ruining Rivella's Character with the world [. . . was] the Incense that was daily offer'd her upon this Occasion from the Men of Vogue and Wit" (778). Describing Rivella's relationship with Peter Vainlove -- a representative of Sir Thomas Skipworth -- Lovemore laments, "Behold what a fine Person Rivella chose to fool away her Reputation with" (784). The image that Manley presents of herself is of a woman profoundly indifferent to her own reputation. She is foolish enough to strike up a friendship with Hilaria (the Duchess of Cleveland), who spreads "Slander and Scandal" (771) about Rivella out of jealousy; she is vain enough to accept and enjoy the public accolades offered her by the wits. This is the scandal that Lovemore reveals: that Rivella has neglected to protect herself from malicious gossip. The indignation and mournfulness with which Lovemore traces her "ruin" insists on the seriousness of his revelation, so that the reader hardly notices the indictment of Rivella collapsing under its own contradictoriness and inconsequence. Rivella is scandalous because she has given the world an opportunity to claim that she is so. Manley produces public gossip about herself in Rivella to prevent anyone else from writing her secret history, but the accusation she levels against herself is in effect so slight that she gives the appearance of scandal

without exacting any of its damaging effects. She protects her reputation by suggesting that the greatest charge to be made against her is that she shows a careless disregard for her own good name -- that she has, in fact, no mind toward protecting herself.

In December, 1709, the year that The New Atalantis appeared, Susanna Centlivre's comedy, The Man's Bewitch'd; or, The Devil to Do about Her, opened at the Haymarket. In its prologue, Manley is attacked for her hypocrisy in daring to make scandalous charges against others:

> Tho' Bickerstaff's vast Genius may engage
> And lash the Vice and follies of the Age;
> Why should tender Delia tax the Nation;
> Stickle, and make a Noise for Reformation,
> Who always gave a Loose, herself to Inclination?[30]

Manley repeats this accusation of her hypocrisy in Rivella, when Lovemore tells D'Aumont that "[t]he Casuists told her a Woman of her Wit had the Privilege of the other Sex, since all things were pardonable to a Lady who could so well give laws to others, yet was not obliged to keep them her self" (780). In Manley's hands, however, the criticism of her conduct is tempered by the suggestion of sexual hypocrisy that makes a "Woman of Wit" earn the privileges accorded to men. Manley appears to indict herself here through Lovemore's reiteration of the claim that she does not adhere to the standards of behavior to which she holds others. She has also shown her audience, however, that "the World [. . .] wou'd never restore a Woman's Reputation, how innocent soever she really were, if Appearances prov'd to be

against her" (768). Her own indulgence of "Inclination," Manley implies, is only a matter of gossip. Thus, she reasserts her legitimacy as a revealer of scandal even as she recapitulates others' complaints against her.

That Manley should depict herself through the eyes of someone like Lovemore reinforces the notion that what interests her in Rivella is not representing herself, but showing herself being represented. She implicates Lovemore, and by extension Charles Gildon himself, in the enterprise of gossip and scandal. What is The Adventures of Rivella, after all, but an elaborate example of male gossip? Kathryn Shevelow has remarked that in the eighteenth century, men's "idle conversation" took place in public, while women's "tattle" happened in private.[31] The exchange between Lovemore and D'Aumont has none of the public nature that Shevelow connects with male discourse, or that Habermas represents as the language of the public sphere. It is instead an intensely private event: "[D'Aumont] made an intimacy with Sir Charles Lovemore, [. . .] If you think it a proper Time to perform your Promise, I will command the Door-keepers, that they suffer none to enter [this Garden] this evening to disturb our Conversation" (737-38). Manley shows her male characters engaged in the "feminine" activity of "tattle": the men are hidden away, gossiping about her. Manley was literally and figuratively indicted for her scandal writing; she in turn indicts those who assail her

while declaring themselves outside of this economy of gossip.

Manley's account of herself as a scandal writer, however, is anything but simple. She moves from one explanation of her work to another, the only unifying factor being her constant awareness of herself as a woman writing (or not writing) about politics. Lovemore tells D'Aumont that "[Rivella] loves Truth, and has too often given her self the Liberty to speak, as well as write it" (750). He thus implies that her scandal narratives represent the truth, and that Rivella has revealed this truth at her own cost.

Manley refuses to prove an easy target, however, for those who would punish her. When she is questioned on the charge of libel, she is pressed to disclose "from whom she had received Information of some special Facts." Manley (as Rivella) claims innocence through fiction: "Her Defence was with much Humility and Sorrow, for having offended, at the same Time denying that any Persons were concern'd with her, or that she had a farther Design than writing for her own Amusement and diversion in the Country; without intending particular Reflections or Characters" (849). The court thoroughly rejects this explanation, and Rivella replies that it therefore must have been pure inspiration. Catherine Gallagher has noted the shrewdness of Manley's ploy: because she insist on the fiction of her work, she forces her accusers to identify the real-life figures that

her characters signify. They "were thus tricked into attaching the scandalous stories to the names of Whig ministers, in a sense becoming parties to the libel."[32] The fictional veneer of Manley's scandal narrative, coupled with the image that she presents of herself as an idle woman, scribbling fantasy for her own entertainment is finally sufficient to secure her release. Lovemore is incensed that, despite "their heinous Offence, and the notorious indiscretion of which they had been guilty" (851), Rivella and her printer and publisher should be allowed by the law to escape punishment. Is it, he wonders ruefully, because the "Persons in Power were ashamed to bring a Woman to her Trial for writing a few amorous Trifles purely for her own Amusement, or that our Laws were defective, as most Persons conceiv'd, because she had serv'd her self with Romantick Names, and a feign'd Scene of Action?" (850). The alternatives hinge on whether Manley is, or only affects the appearance of, a non-political female author.

While in court Rivella manipulates these roles to establish her innocence, and she offers Lovemore a more complicated explanation of her scandal narratives. On the one hand, she represents herself as a revealer of truth, a patriotic woman who has placed the public good ahead of her self-preservation:

> she was proud of having more Courage than had any of our Sex, and of throwing the first Stone, which might give a Hint for other Persons of more Capacity to examine the Defects, and Vices of some Men who took a Delight to impose upon the World,

> by the Pretence of Public Good, whilst their true Design was only to gratify and advance themselves. (845)

Manley then rebukes all the men who have failed to write accounts of concealed, private actions among the corrupt Whigs who lead England. The biblical phrase "to throw the first stone" resonates here because Manley knows full well that she is not "without sin," and that she will meet with swift, retaliatory exposure. She has Lovemore comment that "what is not a Crime in Men is scandalous and unpardonable in Woman" (743); hence, Manley's assertion of her courage. She suggests that she has risked the ire of the most powerful members of society because men lack the nerve to expose them, and has compounded that risk by writing as a woman, a particularly vulnerable target for their reprisal.

In the same speech, however, Manley also portrays her scandal narratives not as the work of a political martyr but as the result of peevishness and as the petty response of a woman herself targeted by gossip:

> all the World was out of Humour with her, and she with all the World[. . .]. [S]he said she did no more by others, than others had done by her (i.e.) Tattle of Frailties; the Town had never shewn her any Indulgence, but on the contrary reported ten fold against her in Matters of which she was wholly Innocent; wheras she did but take up old Stories that all the World had long since reported [. . .]. (845-46)

Manley both asserts and retreats from the political importance of her writing, first by insisting that it is devoted to the good of the nation, then by dismissing it as

mere gossip, "tattle" of others' weaknesses that is prompted only by their unfair reports of her frailties. The vital disclosure of secret ambitions that imperil the public good becomes the trifling trade of old stories long since reported. The New Atalantis, by this account, is not a political document at all, but a purely personal settling of scores. If Manley's work demonstrates anything, however, it is that this personal/political distinction simply does not hold; Manley herself manipulates the ambiguities of these categories in her text when she suggests that there is, finally, no private space.

At the conclusion of The Adventures of Rivella, Lovemore exults in having finally convinced Rivella that "Politicks is not the Business of a Woman" (853). Her agreement comes on purely pragmatic grounds: she consents to the "Folly of a Woman's disobliging any one Party by a Pen equally qualified to divert all" (852). Rivella, whom the Tories fail to protect in return for her service, sees no option but to retreat to the safer ground of "gentle pleasing Theams" (853). Manley, however, staged no retreat: she followed The New Atalantis with two more volumes in 1710, and was reputedly at work on a fifth volume at the time of her death. Rivella is fearful to write without a champion to shield her, but Rivella itself represents Manley's intervention into the fray of gossip on her own behalf. At the end of the text, she slips in, briefly yet bluntly, an admission that ironizes all her many

justifications and explanations of her work: "Scandal between Whig and Tory, goes for nothing" (855). Scandal that goes for nothing is a most apt description of Rivella itself, a scandal narrative that insists that the very charges of scandal it makes do not matter. What Manley shows in The Adventures of Rivella is that she is able to turn talk of her own frailties into a kind of capital for her continued participation in the economy of gossip.

Manley's texts were, in her own day, prominent examples of scandal writing, but they were part of a larger counter-public sphere that used personal detraction to negotiate public standing. The pervasiveness of scandal writing did not lend it stature or full acceptance; its association with the marketing of literature, as I will explain in the next chapter, and its legal implications lent it at best suspect status. Nevertheless, the cultural force of scandal was such that it became a contested site; writers used its discourse while shunning its label. This has contributed to the largely unacknowledged scandalous nature of high literary satire.

NOTES

[1] Michael McKeon, The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987) 156. See also Faramerz Dabhoiwala, "The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 6 (1996): 201-213; Laura Gowing, "Women, Status and the Popular Culture of Dishonour," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 6 (1996): 225-34; David Turner, "'Nothing is so secret but shall be revealed: The Scandalous Life of Robert Foulks," English Masculinities, 1660-1800, ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (New York: Longman, 1999) 169-92; J. A. Sharpe, Defamation and Sexual Slander in Early Modern England: The Church Courts at York, (York: Borthwick Papers, 1980); Mervyn James, English Politics and the Concept of Honour, 1485-1642 (Oxford: Past and Present Society, 1978).

[2] Manley's veiling of her authorship is at the root of a lack of critical consensus about how to approach The Adventures of Rivella. Criticism of the text falls generally into two categories: that which describes Rivella as "fictional autobiography," thus emphasizing its status as an account of Manley's life, and that which terms Rivella an "autobiographical novel," thereby contextualizing the work in the development of fiction in the early eighteenth century. John Richetti and Janet Todd both approach the text in the first manner. In Popular Fiction Before Richardson: Narrative Patterns, 1709-1739 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), Richetti argues that Manley's scandal narratives were politically important in their day, but that they won lasting popularity as erotic fiction. Richetti's consideration of Rivella is confined to a footnote, in which he comments merely that it "is the only source for many of the details of her life" (142, n. 1). In "Life After Sex: The Fictional Autobiography of Delarivier Manley," Women's Studies 15 (1988): 43-55, Janet Todd declares that the text "naughtily subverts" the conventions of stories about virtue in distress and love betrayed when Manley converts her infamy into authorship (50). Todd reads no ironic distance between Manley and Rivella, however, and her treatment of the text as autobiography makes the fictional apparatus seem confusing and distracting: "In her fictional autobiography, [. . . Manley] tells the life of Rivella, a literary character who yet claims to have written Manley's works" (44). This use of a fictional representative of a real figure is, however, a stock practice in the scandal narrative, and Manley's invention of "Rivella" is a cue to

approach the text as an example of that form.

Jean Kern, Lennard Davis and Fidelis Morgan read the text primarily as fiction. In "The Fallen Woman, from the Perspective of Five Early Eighteenth-Century Women Novelists," Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture 10 (1981): 457-68, Kern expresses a common discomfort with scandal as a narrative mode when she write that "[t]wo of these novelists [that she examines] are women who have often been dismissed as sensational scandal mongers -- Mary Manley and Eliza Haywood" (467). Kern thus views Rivella as an "autobiographical novel" about how a "fallen woman can support herself" (462). In Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel (New York: Columbia UP, 1983), Davis refers to Rivella simply as a "novel," in which the main character "is meant unambiguously to be Manley" (118). Davis uses Rivella as an illustration for his assertions about the voyeurism of "news/novel discourse" and the eroticization of the reading process in the period (116). Fidelis Morgan's A Woman of No Character: An Autobiography of Mrs. Manley (London: Faber and Faber, 1986) assembles passages from The Adventures of Rivella, The New Atalantis and other sources, such as Manley's plays and letters, to produce an account of Manley's life. Morgan writes that "all of Mrs. Manley's autobiographical writing was intended to be read as fiction" (20). While Morgan is surely right in observing that Manley did not intend Rivella to be read as autobiography, the way in which Manley presents the work suggests that she meant it to be received not as fiction but as a scandal narrative.

There are only two references to The Adventures of Rivella as a scandal narrative in the work of Manley's critics. April London cites Rivella as a "veiled autobiography in the form of a chronique scandaleuse" in "Placing the Female: The Metonymic Garden in Amatory and Pious Narrative, 1700-1740," Fetter'd or Free? British Women Novelists, 1670-1815, ed. Mary Anne Scholfield and Cecilia Macheski (Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1986) 103. London interprets this positioning of the text as Manley's implicit acceptance of a connection between the content of her work and her own sexual wantonness. This reading overlooks the complexities of the narrative, which indicate that Manley is contesting, not embracing, this connection.

The other reference comes in Catherine Gallagher's "Political Crimes and Fictonal Alibis: The Case of Delarivier Manley" in her book, Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1820 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1994). Gallagher otherwise characterizes Rivella as fictional autobiography, but in her final reference to the text, she notes that it "itself is an histoire scandaleuse" (137). She does not discuss, however, the ways in which it functions as a

scandal narrative, nor why Manley might present her life's story in this mode.

[3] Richetti, Popular Fiction Before Richardson, 120.

[4] Paula Backscheider, Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993), 104-12.

[5] Leo Braudy, The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History, rev. ed. (New York: Vintage, 1997), 348. The period's more sceptical attitude toward aristocratic conceptions of honor is encapsulated in Bernard Mandeville's observation that "[i]n great Families [honor] is like the Gout, generally counted Hereditary, and all Lords Children are born with it." Mandeville, "Remark R," The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, ed. F. B. Kaye (Oxford: Clarendon, 1924) 1: 199.

[6] Alexander Pope, "The Rape of the Lock," 3.165 in The Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. Geoffrey Tillotson (London: Methuen, 1962) 2: 181.

[7] The New Atalantis, Fidelis Morgan writes, "was read by everyone from lords, ladies and politicians to the lowest country bumpkins" (20). Although this might overstate the case, it is at least right in suggesting that Manley's work enjoyed broad appeal.

[8] The Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973), 12: 921.

[9] Gallagher, Nobody's Story, 131.

[10] Patricia Meyer Spacks, Gossip (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 33.

[11] Todd, "Life After Sex: The Fictional Autobiography of Delarivier Manley," 53.

[12] Manley prefaces her assault on the Marlboroughs in The New Atalantis, for example, with the observation that "all will be managed in the new reign by their advice" (14).

[13] For an interesting treatment of gender, political pampleteering and the public/private distinction, see Leah Price, "Vies Privées et Scandaleuses: Marie-Antoinette and the Public Eye," The Eighteenth Century 33 (1992): 176-91.

[14] Manley's political contributions were not limited to

the scandal narrative; she also wrote pieces of propaganda that were, as Ros Ballaster notes, indistinguishable from those of her male counterparts. See Ballaster, Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684-1740 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992) 121.

[15] Clare Brant, "Speaking of Woman: Scandal and the Law in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," in Women, Texts, and Histories, 1575-1760, ed. Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (New York: Routledge, 1992), 254.

[16] Delariver Manley, The New Atalantis, ed. Ros Ballaster (New York: Penguin, 1991), 14-15.

[17] Ballaster, Seductive Forms 128.

[18] For a discussion of the equation drawn between prostitution and publication in the eighteenth century, see Catherine Gallagher, "'Who Was that Masked Woman?' The Prostitute and the Playwright in the Comedies of Aphra Behn," in Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Criticism, ed. Heidi Hutner (Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 1993), 65-85. Reprinted in Nobody's Story.

[19] See Ballaster, "'A Genius for Love': Sex as Politics in Delarivier Manley's Scandal Fiction" in Seductive Forms, 114-52.

[20] Authorship has been attributed to Jonathan Swift, but Donald F. Bond concludes that there is no firm evidence in support of this conjecture (Tatler, 434n).

[21] The Tatler, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) 1:439-40.

[22] John Wilson Bowyer notes a 1709 reference to "Scandalosissima Scoundrelia" as an allusion to Manley in The Celebrated Mrs. Centlivre (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 1952), 152.

[23] Edmund Curll, "To the Reader" in Mrs. Manley's History of Her Own Life and Times, 4th edn. (London, 1725). Quoted in Ralph Straus, The Unspeakable Curll (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1974), 44.

[24] John Dunton describes Gildon as a "Whig Author" in his Life and Errors (London: J. Nichols, Son, and Bentley, 1818) 2: 784.

[25] Straus, Unspeakable Curll, 44.

[26] Delarivier Manley, The Adventures of Rivella; or, the History of the Author of the *Atalantis* in The Novels of Delarivier Manley, ed. Patricia Koster (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1971), 2: 735.

[27] William Warner argues that Manley "intrigues her reader with a narrative which is structured to seduce the reading body into pleasure." See Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1998) 99.

[28] Ballaster, Seductive Forms, 147-50.

[29] See The New Atalantis, ed. Ballaster, 222-29.

[30] Susanna Centlivre, The Man's Bewitch'd; or, The Devil to Do about Her (London, 1709). The prologue is spoken by a male actor and was penned "by a Gentleman"; it asserts the cultural authority of a man (Richard Steele, in the form of Isaac Bickerstaff) to identify others' flaws, while castigating that behavior in a woman (Manley). The prologue begins:

> Our Female Author trembling stands within,
> Her Fear arises from another's Sin
> One of her Sex has so abus'd the Town,
> That on her Score she dreads your angry Frown.

Manley thus functions as a foil for Centlivre, whose innocent intentions are proclaimed by disowning Manley's supposed vituperation.

[31] Kathryn Shevelow, Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical (New York: Routledge, 1989), 97.

[32] Gallagher, Nobody's Story, 503-504.

# CHAPTER THREE

# INVENTING GRUB STREET: THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE AND THE PROFESSION OF AUTHORSHIP

> "Whoever hath an ambition to be heard in a crowd, must press, and squeeze, and threat, and climb with indefatigable pains, till he has exalted himself to a certain degree of altitude above them."
>
> Jonathan Swift, A Tale of a Tub[1]

The debate over scandal and satire was a debate over what belongs in print; writers in the period were similarly engaged with the question of who belongs in print. Both debates sprang from a sense of dissolving cultural control and authority.[2] The developments in publication that contributed to the bourgeois public sphere's emergence -- the proliferation of presses, the relaxation of constraints on publication, the affordability of printed matter -- destabilized authorship. Writing was now a commodity sold in a literary market, authors could earn a living from their work, and the text, with the passage of the 1709 Copyright Act, was recognized as the author's creative property.[3] The professionalization of authorship made the author's cultural status uncertain; writing's entry into the market, in some eyes, threatened to turn authoring into just another form of

compensated labor. The figure of the working author is a common one in early eighteenth-century writing, familiar to us as the "Grub Street hack." The hack, I will argue, was an invention of self-appointed literary élites, such as Pope, Swift and Addison, a way of placing themselves outside the market they sought to dominate by associating it exclusively with the so-called writer for hire. This figure of the hack was invented to stigmatize the participation in print culture of writers who were seen as unfit for the authority publication implied; the formulation of the hack challenges Habermas's notion of the eighteenth-century British public sphere as a space of open participation. The emblematic product of the hack's intervention in the public sphere, furthermore, was scandal writing; together, the hack and scandal were exiled from legitimacy in the sphere of public exchange.

The story of the Grub Street hack, as we have come to know it under the tutelage of canonical eighteenth-century authors, is the story of intrusion, of uneducated, lower-class individuals taking to writing when, with the collapse of controls on publication, it became a means of making money. It is, as Dustin Griffin has remarked, the familiar narrative of a fall, the "Scriblerian myth of corruption," in which literature, the "province of learned gentlemen" is overrun by "illiterate hacks thrusting up from below."[4] The hack came to denote the diminishment of literature by the corrupting influence of market forces and

the simple availability of publication. Thus, the hack functioned as a concept through which to regulate not just authorship but the public sphere itself, a constraining stigma on the form and source of public discourse.

Grub Street was an actual street in London near Moorfields and Bedlam, where many struggling writers did in fact live. "Grub Street" as a term for commercial writing was first used in 1630 by poet John Taylor, and gained currency during the Civil War, when the vying factions hired writers to work as pamphleteers. It was a common phrase by the time of the Restoration, "when the professional writer became a familiar part of society."[5] The physical reality of Grub Street is the premise of hackdom's most extensive chronicle, Pat Rogers's Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture (1972). Rogers argues that an understanding of the hack's actual conditions is necessary to appreciate fully the canonical satire of Pope and Swift, and to comprehend the imaginative power that the metaphor of Grub Street exercised over them. Rogers's literalist treatment of this metaphor, however, while providing useful information about the history of Grub Street the place, never questions, and consequently reinforces the distinction between hacks and literary writers. Rogers positions himself against critics who have argued that the hack writers -- "the victims of Augustan satire" -- are inconsequential:

> I shall contend that it is profitable to adopt, at least for a moment, the Dunce's eye view. By studying the victim in his natural habitat, we do

> gain considerable insight into the procedures and motivation of the satirist. By taking seriously the replies which the hack made to Swift, for instance, we may often find out more about the Dean's intentions than if we restricted ourselves to the presuppositions of Renaissance humanism, or the données of Anglican rationalism. It is, apart from anything else, a favourite device of the Scriblerian party to beat down an opponent with his own weapon. Footling writers the Dunces may have been -- many certainly were -- but their existence was no footling thing for the course of English satire.[6]

Rogers's supposition that the hack is an empirical phenomenon to be studied in his "natural habitat" and his insistence that he has worked to give only a history of the hack, to "present a world," while "not engaging in the theory of literature" (14-15) has dated his book. For the hack Rogers puts under the microscope is an imaginative construct, a metaphor for what authorship should not be. That flesh and blood authors were subsumed by this construction to the point that Rogers could take such a naively empirical approach emphasizes rather than contradicts its imaginative force.

Authorship was at an uncertain moment in its history in the early eighteenth century because the author's relation to the emergent marketplace was unestablished. In the balance was the cultural stature authors could maintain if writing were to be recognized as paid labor and the status of being published were generally accessible. The professionalization of authorship, which emerged with the literary market, was a source of contention, as particular writers sought to reconcile exclusivity with the commercial

conditions of writing.[7] The development of the market system was in part the result of political upheaval in the seventeenth century. In response to the Long Parliament and the Civil War, opposing factions used pamphleteering to enlist support. The pamphlets of the Civil War set a pattern that would define early print culture: each publication tended to "provoke one or more hostile retorts."[8] Patronage was the receding model of literary dissemination, by which the imprimatur of the patron was the point of access to publication; in exchange for the honor and status they accrued through their association with the work, patrons provided authors with social and material reward.[9] The market system took away this gatekeeping function performed by the patron, installing instead the bookseller as the point of access to publication.[10] Booksellers mediated between authors and the public, deciding what to publish on the basis of what they could expect to sell. The focus of publication thus shifted from the patron's approval to the public's -- an emergent reading public which, some felt, lacked standards of judgment and to whose pleasure authors would cater. These combined attitudes -- that the author is now unfavorably beholden to public approval and that the market determines literary success -- are concisely expressed in Pope's Art of Sinking in Poetry, where he declares that the "true Design" of modern authors is "Profit or Gain; in order to acquire which, 'tis necessary to procure Applause, by administering

Pleasure to the Reader: From whence it follows demonstrably, that their Productions must be suited to the present Taste."[11]

The market represents the loss of traditional cultural authority and, while periodicals such as the Tatler and Spectator worked to shape "present Taste," opponents of the market system saw the availability of print, combined with the lure of profit, as outstripping such efforts.[12] A 1736 illustration from the Grub Street Journal (no. 147) conveys the resulting sense of cultural disorder. In a three-part engraving, titled "The Art and Mystery of Printing Emblematically Displayed," the viewer sees the various stages of the printing process performed by a series of grotesque creatures.[13] In the first panel, an ass assembles the type; in the second, an assortment of animals print the pages; and in the final panel, a devil hangs the printed pages -- prominently titled Cases of Impotency -- to dry. The illustration suggests a publishing world turned upside down, in the hands of those least likely to exercise judgment or to act on behalf of the public good. In the example it affords of a published text (Cases of Impotency), furthermore, the illustration intimates the supposed tendency of unregulated publication to produce scandal writing. Scandal discourse is positioned as a sort of lowest common denominator, at which the uneducated body of authors and the unschooled reading public can converge.

Fears of cultural disorder -- which find their consummate expression in Pope's Dunciad -- were fostered by actual diminution in legal control over publication. When Parliament allowed the 1662 Licensing Act to lapse in 1695, it eliminated pre-publication censorship and restrictions on the quantity of master-printers and legal printing presses.[14] The quantity of published printed matter increased and this proliferation alarmed those who favored more restrictions on access to print. Mark Rose has argued that Parliament's decision not to renew the Licensing Act was recognition of the market's dominion over publication.[15] While Parliament was prepared for literature's absorption into the market economy, however, not all authors shared that equanimity. The literary marketplace made the writer's work a commodity. This self-evident observation underlies much of the anxiety about print culture and the public sphere that provided the impetus for creation of the hack.[16]

While we need to look at the hack as a constructed image of commodified authorship and to recognize that published writers in this period were all participants in the market, there is nevertheless a useful distinction to be made between two kinds of authors: those who resisted the market and those who did not.[17] The former group, including Pope, Addison, and Swift present themselves as specifically literary writers, writing within a classical tradition for purposes that transcend market interests. Swift and Pope, as Peter Stallybrass and Allon White point out, perceive the

market as a grotesque that must be contained in the name of a refined public sphere:

> Swift and Pope perpetually identify the scene of writing with the fairground and the carnival and in both writers the festive repertoire is satirically deformed by the vicious competitive circumstances of the literary market. The 'marketplace' has become 'the market' and the individual aspiring poets denigrate each other by trying to associate <u>everyone else</u> with the vulgarity of the fair whilst repudiating any connection which they themselves might have with such a world.[18]

In fact, though, Stallybrass and White are describing a fairly constricted circle of authors who were in any position to repudiate this connection. The latter group are most familiar to us through their characterization by the first set; they do not resist writing as a form of labor and as such are portrayed as corrupt, mercenary authors. In many cases, we know them best as the dunces of the <u>Dunciad</u>. Among them are Ned Ward, John Oldmixon, John Dennis, Charles Gildon, Eliza Haywood, Manley, Colley Cibber, and John Duckett. There prominently, too, is Daniel Defoe who, in his <u>Vindication of the Press</u> (1718), defends writing as a form of work and sympathetically portrays the concerns of authors most dependent on their own labor: "It is a Misfortune to Authors both in Prose and Verse who are reduc'd to the Necessity of constant writing for Subsistence, that the numerous Performances, publish'd by them, cannot possibly be so correct as they might be, could more Time be afforded in the Composure."[19] The hurried composition Defoe here describes is a product of the

marketplace; the aristocratic tradition of letters, in which writing is the culmination of education and is pursued at leisure, has a different relationship to time.[20] Defoe, however, defends writing as paid work: booksellers and authors "should be permitted the Liberty of Writing and Printing of either [political] Side for Bread, free from Ignominy; and as getting Money is the chief Business of the World, so these Measures cannot by any means be esteem'd Unjust or Disreputable, with regard to the several Ways of accumulating Wealth, introduc'd in Exchange-Alley, and at the other End of the Town" (21).[21]

While Defoe defends writing as a legitimately compensated form of work, those who resist the market depict paid writing as disreputable. Behind the distaste for writing for money was the conviction that compensation could only compromise the author.[22] As John Brewer has explained, "Literature for profit could not be unsullied and unbiased; tainted with lucre, it became a hideous grotesque -- distorted, partial and blind."[23] If the new literary market was driven by writing for profit, then that market was inherently suspect and the bulk of exchange within print culture fell outside the bounds of literary worth. This is precisely the stance taken by Pope and Swift, who express overt hostility to the eighteenth century's proliferation of print, which figures in their writing as a culturally destructive torrent.[24]

In his Tale of a Tub, Swift links the volume of publication and authors with the ephemerality of their works. His narrator, one of the "Grub Street brotherhood" (38), dedicates his text to "Prince Posterity" and puzzles over the flickering existence of their collective texts: time's "inveterate malice is such to the writings of our age, that of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next revolution of the sun, there is not one to be heard of [. . .]" (20). In the "Martin Scriblerus" preface to the Dunciad Variorum, Pope writes that the "occasion and the cause which moved our Poet to this particular work" is that he "lived in those days, when (after providence had permitted the Invention of Printing as a Scourge for the Sins of the learned) Paper also became so cheap, and printers so numerous, that a deluge of authors cover'd the land."[25] Pope proposes to his readers that the expansion of authorship is a threatening development; indeed, he goes on to take up the cause of the "honest unwriting subject" whose peace was not only "daily molested, but unmerciful demands were made of his applause, yea of his money, by such as would neither earn the one or deserve the other" (49). Pope envisions a public sphere invaded by inept writers who -- by their very participation -- diminish and pollute that sphere; the non-participant, the "unwriting subject" is the hero here. The occasion of Pope's Dunciad, in other words, is resistance to precisely the open, participatory public sphere Jurgen Habermas locates in

eighteenth-century Britain and of which he cites the Dunciad itself as evidence.

The print culture that Habermas sees as necessary to the functioning of the public sphere was, for contemporaries, disruptive of it.[26] Print, Habermas suggests, is a device for addressing a broad, necessarily inclusive public sphere. But this participatory public sphere can also be construed as such a variety of print voices that there is no recognized body of authority; print, rather than being a vehicle for critical-rational consensus, becomes a device of faction. The proliferation of print is itself antithetical to meaningful critical-rational debate, Swift suggests in his Tale of a Tub.[27] Instead of print culture serving the rational public sphere, in the eyes of eighteenth-century figures such as Pope and Swift, it actually undermines it. When Pope praises the "honest, unwriting subject," he endorses a model of literary culture in which certain sanctioned authors produce the texts received by a passive reading public. The literary market, however, was propelling print culture in a different direction, one in which publications elicited and provoked response, in which readers were also writers and in which the standard for participation was interest on the part of a bookseller. The so-called hacks' participation in print culture thus represents to Swift and Pope the loss of literary authority rather than only its redistribution. The hack is a result and force of disorder, as echoed in the

repeated image of the literary marketplace engulfed in an almost nauseating proliferation of writing that finally, in Book IV of Pope's Dunciad, overwhelms and destroys civilization.

The early eighteenth century is shot through with references to the "scribling itch," an image that explicitly links participation in print culture with a lack of control; the impulsiveness that Pope and Swift locate in the market becomes a force within the writer's own person. In "On Poetry: A Rhapsody" (1733), Swift explains how to "distinguish, which is which, / the Poet's Vein or scribling Itch" (73-74).[28] Addison inveighs against "a certain Distemper [. . .] as Epidemical as the Small-Pox": the "Itch of Writing." In the consequently voluminous "Species of Scriblers," Addison sees a lamentable perversion of printing's promise: "It is a melancholy thing to consider that the Art of Printing, which might be the greatest Blessing to Mankind, should prove detrimental to us, and that it should be made use of to scatter Prejudice and Ignorance through People, instead of conveying to them Truth and Knowledge."[29] When the power of public discourse is available to all, Addison maintains, the quality of exchange falls and public life as a whole is diminished. Addison's lament for print as a means of serving the public good is at the same time a gesture of self-promotion: as one capable of recognizing "Prejudice and Ignorance," his comment implies, he can put print to its proper use. Participation threatens

authority and distinction; implicit in Addison's complaint is the notion that the power of publication has fallen into the wrong hands.

The relationship between literary authority and the construction of the hack is illuminated by Marlon Ross's perceptive study of print and authorship. Ross examines this sense of misplaced authority, and rightly sees in it a self-authorizing impulse on the part of the Scriblerians. He refers to a distinction between writers and authors that is at the brink of erasure in the eighteenth century: "Scriblerians, fearful of losing the cultural distinction between [. . .] false authority and authentic authority, set out to keep this distinction intact."[30] From the time of scribal culture, Ross argues, legibility signified importance and was devoted to writing that should be accessible to more than just its creator. Print "solidifies and intensifies the difference" between private "scribbling" and publicly relevant, shareable text. At the same time that print heightens the difference between the legible and illegible, the public and the private word, its very accessibility threatens through dilution the authority it connotes. Can print carry the same value of authority when it is available to all writers? The problem, as Ross suggests, becomes even more complex because print, formerly connoting authority, begins to confer it:

> At first, uniform script is the effect of authority, not the cause of it. But as print gains ascendancy, this relation is reversed.

> Originally, to be an authority is to be scripted. But with time, to be printed is to be an authority. Early eighteenth-century writers are caught in the swivel moment of this process of reversal, not only when print begins to give the stamp of authority, but also when authority begins to become fragmented by the possessibility of private knowledge. (236-37)

Print confers authority on material as publicly relevant, but "false authority" is easily confused with the "authentic authority of that which is printed because it commands our attention" (237). Traditional authors such as Pope, Swift and Dryden distill in their figure of the hack this sense of false authority; the very conception of false authority, furthermore, repudiates the direction in which print culture was developing, as participation was valued over privilege. This earlier understanding of print as an exceptional form of discourse was implicit in the law's deeming libel a separate and more serious crime than slander.[31] As print became more available, it also became less authoritative, a change that reflected and encouraged the discursive nature of eighteenth-century print culture.[32] Scandal writing was a product of this changing conception of print. As an emblem of the new conditions of publication, it was closely associated with the Grub Street hack; scandal and the hack became tightly bound together, one a form without literary standing, the other a writer without literary authority.

The most influential text, of course, in establishing the figure of the hack is Pope's Dunciad. It is, on one

hand -- as I will examine in the next chapter -- Pope's catalog of personal invective against other writers; on the other, it is an elaborately conceived screed against the print culture of which it is itself an emblematic product.[33] The targets of his satire are the "dunces," those representatives of commodified literature who signify the collapse, Pope contends, of cultural value. The intensity of Pope's interest in his subject is attested to by the poem's varied manifestations. Pope published the Dunciad first in 1728, as a three-book poem; in 1729, he published the Dunciad Variorum, in which he expands his attacks on the dunces through extensive, mock-scholarly notes. In 1742, Pope returned to the Dunciad yet again, publishing a fourth book, a kind of grand finale, in which the ascendancy of the goddess Dulness envelops civilization in darkness and chaos. In 1743, Pope republished the entire work as the Dunciad in Four Books and substituted Colley Cibber for Lewis Theobald as king of the dunces. Pope had long nursed a sense of personal and professional pique against Cibber and many of the other figures in the poem, and he memorably avenged his grievance in a poem that vilified writers inhabiting the new publishing world and the scandal that characterized it -- even as the poem itself participated in both.

The Dunciad opens with the imputation that popular culture has invaded the territory of elite endeavor: Colley Cibber "brings / Smithfield Muses to the ear of Kings."[34] In the Variorum notes, Pope explains that the amusements of

the Bartholomew Fair at Smithfield, "formerly agreeable only to the Taste of the Rabble, were, by the Hero of this Poem and others of equal Genius, brought to the Theaters [. . .] to be the reigning Pleasures of the Court and Town" (DV I: n2).[35] The opening lines set the stage for the poem, in which literature has been seized by dunces. The action of the poem is the effort by the goddess Dulness, "Daughter of Chaos and Eternal Night" (I: 12) to reclaim the power she held in pre-literate times. The hacks, or dunces, are the agents of that reassertion. Within Bedlam, the famed London madhouse, "[o]ne Cell there is, conceal'd from vulgar eye, / The Cave of Poverty and Poetry" (I: 33-34). From it issue the literary effluvia that Pope attributes to his age: "Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, Magazines" and "all the Grub Street race" (I: 42-43).

As the poem proceeds through the four books of its final version, the dunces celebrate their king's enthronement with games that enact Pope's characterizations of the literary market: booksellers chase down the chimera of a poet; authors vie in competitions of flattering patrons, creating noise and diving through mud. The sound of the dunces is a meaningless clamor:

> Now thousand tongues are heard in one loud din:
> The Monkey-mimicks rush discordant in;
> 'Twas chatt'ring, grinning, mouthing, jabb'ring all. (II: 235-37)

The voices of print culture, Pope asserts, are a nonsensical jumble, aping the writing of legitimate literary authority

that he locates in his own text.

When Dulness takes the king to her temple and casts in his mind's eye a vision of Britain under her sway, she conjures up Grub Street:

> What aids, what armies to assert her cause!
> See all her progeny, illustrious sight!
> Behold, and count them, as they rise to light.
> As Berecynthia, while her offspring vye
> In homage to the Mother of the sky,
> Surveys around her, in the blest abode,
> An hundred sons, and ev'ry son a God:
> Not with less glory mighty Dulness crown'd,
> Shall take thro' Grub-street her triumphant round;
> And her Parnassus glancing o'er at once,
> Behold an hundred sons, and each a Dunce.
> (III: 128-38)

Pope thus configures the Grub Street hacks as a multitude, an army of dunces who threaten to vitiate England's cultural life; the imagery of the dangerous mass is a sharp counterpoint to the public sphere as a space that is, at least theoretically, open to all.

A cluster of qualities gathered around the image of the hack: lower-class origins, desire for profit driven by desperate circumstances, readiness to libel to relieve these circumstances, literary ignorance, and an affinity for the market. This convergence of characteristics is memorably suggested in Richard Savage's 1729 pamphlet, <u>An Author to be Lett</u>. Savage, the source of much of the personal information about fellow writers that his friend Pope exploited in the <u>Dunciad</u>, depicts an archetypal hack, the tellingly-named Iscariot Hackney. The pamphlet advertises Hackney's availability for hire; to establish his

credentials, he provides an autobiographical sketch: "when my Mother was pregnant of me, she was delivered of a Monster. It was observed also, at the time of my Birth, that a Weezle was heard to shriek; and a Bat (tho' at Noon Day) flew into the Roome, and settled upon the Midwife's Wrist, just as she received me."[36] Behind Savage's fantasy is a more genuinely argued sense of disturbed order. The bat at noon that heralds the infant Iscariot Hackney's arrival parallels Savage's own sense of outraged harmony, when he describes in the preface the intrusion of lower-class individuals into the upper-class realm of authorship:

> Most of the Persons are of very low Parentage, and without any Pretence of Merit, are aspiring to the Rank of Gentlemen. Thus they become ill Oeconomists, Poverty is the Consequence of ill Oeconomy, and dirty Tricks the Consequence of their Poverty. Tho' they are sad Writers, they might have been good Mechanicks, and therefore by endeavouring to shine in Spheres, to which they are unequal, are guilty of depriving the Publick of many that might have been its useful Members. (ii)

In fact, as Pat Rogers has shown, most of those labeled hacks were not members of the lower class; the majority were from middle-class families, "the WASPs, as it were, of that era" (281). Savage, however, implies that the privileged status of authorship is coveted by men and women trying to escape poverty. Their effort is misguided, he maintains, because their basic unfitness for authorship predetermines their failure, so that the poverty they are fleeing through authorship is in fact perpetuated by their work as authors.

This is an opinion Pope also voices, asserting that the "dull and malicious" writers of his day were created by "Dulness and Poverty; the one born with them, the other contracted, by neglect of their proper talent thro' self-conceit of greater abilities" (DV 50). Their maliciousness is a product of their desperation; the scandal writing that embodies this maliciousness is a symptom of the wrong people participating in public discourse. Savage does not see the expansion of publication as extending the boundaries of who can be an author; rather, he works to convince his readers that those boundaries are inviolable. The attempted evasion of these limitations, he contends, is personally detrimental to the authors, who cannot prosper, and to the public, which is denied the useful work the writers would otherwise be doing. An anonymous poem of 1733, "The Art of Scribling, Address'd to All the Scriblers of the Age," expresses a similar view. The poet first situates writing and trade antithetically:

> I can't endure, though ten times better paid,
> To exercise my true Profession -- Trade;
> Like all my Tribe, my proper Sphere I scorn,
> Business I hate -- I was a Scribler born.[37]

Hacks, the poet suggests, reduce writing to an easy form of compensated labor; seeking to escape their "proper Sphere" of work by authoring, they instead devalue authoring into a form of work:

> Besides, the Truth to speak, I'm lazy too,
> And can't endure corporeal Work to do;
> And though by writing, I live very ill,
> One Good I find -- 'tis done by sitting still.

> I own for Learning, I have none at all;
> As little Wit -- but I've an inward Call;
> And what need proper Parts, or Education,
> To those that have a scribling Inclination?[38]

The poet's mocking reference to an "inward call" alludes to the Dissenters' view that such a call authorizes one to preach, a conception of authority that runs against the culturally dominant model endorsed by the Church of England. The hack is a character of absurdity in the poem, driven to write by the most pragmatic impulses -- compelled to work, he chooses an endeavor that appeals to his laziness for the simple reason that he is blind to its intellectual demands.

"The hack" can be neatly captured in the poem's speaker or in Savage's Iscariot Hackney because it is an imaginative projection into which actual authors were absorbed. This quality of abstraction is key. The reader's conviction that this "Grub Street race" poses the dangers Pope claims for it, for example, depends on a belief in duncehood as he conjures it. It is the swarming of the dunces in the poem into an undifferentiated mass of literary incompetence and venial motives, Brean Hammond has argued, that holds the poem together; once we consider them as individuals, discovering their range of abilities and the varied nature of their texts, we begin to question Pope's characterization and "so the garment of duncehood unravels."[39] Hammond's sense of duncehood's fragility turns on the spectrum of talent that Pope groups together as dunces; but the simple split that Pope assumes between, as Ross articulates it,

false and authentic authority, relies on a dichotomous understanding of literary value.[40] The hacks are necessarily an undifferentiated group because the idea of the hack was developed to embody the illegitimacy in contrast to which the legitimate announces itself.[41] The issue of the distinction between satire and libel is analogous; writers such as Pope employ the tactics of libel while maintaining that their texts are not libelous.[42] The libel becomes that against which satire defines itself, burying and reburying the ambiguities that threaten distinction.

William Warner, in his discussion of the elevation of novel reading, makes an argument that applies, too, to the situation of the author: "The success of the elevated novel in the 1740s [. . .] pushes the early novels of Behn, Manley, and Haywood into the margins of literary histories, where they nonetheless never quite disappear, but serve instead as an abject trace or degraded 'other' needed to secure the identity of the 'real' (that is, legitimate) novel."[43] Authors such as Pope and Swift used the idea of the hack to reassert their own dominance over the growing mass of print culture. The Grub Street hack is at once discredited as a source of literary value and put forward to emphasize the importance of that value. The hack's degraded status is made clear in the parasitic imagery frequently used to describe it.[44] Addison, for example, philosophically reasons that "every nobler Creature is as it

were the Basis and Support of Multitudes that are his inferiors."

> This Consideration very much comforts me, when I think on those numberless Vermin that feed upon this Paper, and find their Sustenance out of it: I mean, the small Wits and Scribblers that every Day turn a Penny by nibbling at my Lucubrations. This has been so advantageous to this little Species of Writers that, if they do me Justice, I may expect to have my Statue erected in Grub-street, as being a common Benefactor to that Quarter.[45]

The host is primary in the parasitic relationship; it is the source of that which is coveted by the parasite, and so the imagery captures the hierarchical relation authors such as Addison perceive between themselves and other writers. This imagery is also an ironic choice because, as I have above suggested, the status of legitimate author is dependent on the figure of the hack for its (negative) expression.

The notion of the beset author in print culture is also articulated by Swift, who claims an imperiled position that is itself an assertion of primacy:

> [. . .] ev'ry Critick can devour
> My Work and me in half an Hour.
> Would Men of Genius cease to write,
> The Rogues must dye for Want and Spight,
> Must dye for Want of Food and Rayment,
> If Scandal did not find them Payment.[46]

The economic vulnerability that is built into the conception of the hack becomes the explanation for venial literary production, as Pope notes when he writes that "[o]ur indulgent Poet, whenever he has spoken of any dirty or low work constantly puts us in mind of the Poverty of the Offenders, as the only extenuation of such practices" (DV

II.n270). Swift characterizes the legitimate author as a non-complicit provider for the hacks, who feed parasitically off his reputation; their financial wants makes them receptive to libel. In this way, libel is construed as the effect of allowing individuals unsuited to authorship to take part in print culture, a point Richard Savage makes explicitly: "Should not R-ch-rd M-r-l-y rather have been blacking Shoes at the Corner of Streets (to which, it is well known, his industrious, and more prudent younger Brother submitted) than black'ning Reputations in the History of Mother Wisebourn and Weekly Journals?" (An Author to be Lett iii). In contrast to the proclaimed public-spiritedness of the personal satirist, the libeler, Savage contends, is motivated by misguided ambition and sheer indifference to others, a sadism he highlights in Iscariot Hackney:

> I was fond of tearing away the Legs and Wings of Flies, of picking out the Eyes of some little Bird, or laming some favourite Lap-Dog, merely by way of Amusement. This was only a Sign, that one time or other I should have Ill-nature enough for a great Wit. Now I understand to be a great Wit is to take a Pleasure in giving every Body Pain, and to shew no Mercy to a Reputation, which is dearer to some Fools than perhaps a Limb, or an Eye. (2)

Disregard for reputation is, in Swift's writing, characteristic of the public sphere in his day. Publicity was transformed by print culture, he suggests, as it fell into the hands of writers prepared to exploit publicity for their own gain. As Dustin Griffin observes, the Scriblerian

view was that "[l]iberty of the press had degenerated into licentiousness and libel."[47] Pope attributes libel to freedom of printing, stating that "Liberty of the Press was so unlimited, that it grew dangerous to refuse [scriblers] either [applause or money]: For they would forthwith publish slanders unpunish'd [. . .]."[48] Pope valorizes his public revelation of private flaws when he justifies himself as a "satirist," as I will discuss in the next chapter; in the hands of writers who improperly crave public attention, Pope maintains, such exposure is denigrated to a mere device for securing this notice.

Swift imagines his own vulnerability to the hacks in "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift," where he describes his reputation besieged by an eager Grub Street:

> Now Grub-Street Wits are all employ'd;
> With Elegies, the Town is cloyed:
> Some Paragraph in ev'ry Paper,
> To <u>curse</u> the <u>Dean</u>, or <u>bless</u> the <u>Drapier</u>.
> (165-68)[49]

He is helpless to intervene on his own behalf. The "Scriblers of the prevailing Party," Swift explains in a footnote, "which he always opposed, will libel him after his Death" (n.168). Death silences Swift, allowing others to represent him without his response; his inability to write for himself leaves him defenseless before the machinery of Public representation. His death, he suggests, will Occasion a public appropriation of his life by the Unscrupulous publishers and hacks who will seize on its Money-making possibilities:

Now Curl his Shop from Rubbish drains;
Three genuine Tomes of Swift's Remains.
And then to make them pass the glibber,
Revis'd by Tibbalds, Moore, and Cibber.
He'll treat me as he does my Betters.
Publish my Will, my Life, my Letters.
Revive the Libels born to dye;
Which Pope must bear, as well as I. (197-204)

Swift positions himself and Pope as the victims of a libelous print culture; they endure, rather than participate in, scandalous exchange. The question of how to cope with libel occupies Swift in the "Delany" poems, "To Dr. Delany on the Libels Writ against him" and "To a Friend who had been much abused in many inveterate Libels." Swift demands of his friend, "What's to be done? shall wit and learning chose, / To live obscure and have no fame to lose?"[50] The endurance of libel, Swift implies, is the price to be paid in coming forward to battle for the sake of public discourse. The cost of evading those libels is an obscurity that cedes the public sphere to detractive exchange and other writing unworthy of print. Like Pope, Swift relies on the imagery of a swarm that simultaneously suggests the cultural threat posed by the hacks and their personal inconsequence:

Shew me the same numerick Flea,
That bit your Neck but Yesterday,
You then may boldly go in Quest
To find the Grub-Street Poet's Nest.[51]

Libel writing becomes, in Swift's treatment, the price that genuine literary authority must bear in the new print culture, and against which it must struggle to ensure that the values of Grub Street do not become the values of

literary culture. Swift defines himself and those deemed fellow-writers in their opposition to the hack, an opposition both relational and active.

Scandal writing thus functions to the Grub Street hack's inventors as an indicator of the public sphere's corruption by market forces and a device through which to advance their call for an exclusive conception of authorship. Scandal writing and the hack are mutually reinforcing concepts: publication of scandal writing lowers the standard for public discourse, thus drawing more hack writers into the print culture through the lure of easy libels, which in turn pour into the market in ever-greater quantities. Scandal and the hacks are, by this account, both prevailing currents within print culture and yet of neglible significance. Unsurprisingly, as I will investigate in the next chapter, the individuals designated as hacks resisted this picture, reinscribing self-excused authors such as Pope within the context of scandal writing.

NOTES

[1] Jonathan Swift, A Tale of a Tub in The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939) 1: 33.

[2] The issue of authority was of broad concern in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England; as Earl Miner has commented, "[t]he interfusion of literature, religion, politics, social organization and economics in the [seventeenth] century made proper authority a revolutionary issue of the state of letters as well as politics." Miner, "Introduction," Literary Transmission and Authority: Dryden and Other Writers, ed. Earl Miner and Jennifer Brady (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993) 1.

[3] For discussion of the Copyright Act, see Mark Rose, Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993) 42-49.

[4] Dustin Griffin, "Fictions of Eighteenth-Century Authorship," Essays in Criticism 43 (1993): 182.

[5] Philip Pinkus, Grub Street Stripp'd Bare (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1968) 13, n.1.

[6] Pat Rogers, Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture (London: Methuen, 1972) 3.

[7] The notion of the "professional" writer is itself ambiguous. Brean Hammond, for instance, argues that "self-crowned laureates" (including Dryden, Pope and Gay) presented writing as a fundamentally anti-professional activity, even while benefiting from the conditions of the marketplace. While Hammond suggests that privileged authors treated professionalism as a corruption of authorship, Linda Zionkowski contends that they used professionalism as a tool of exclusivity, a ranking of work that placed writing beyond the bounds of lesser forms of labor. In this way, the professionalism of writing becomes an extension of class distinctions. See Hammond, Professional Imaginative Writing in England, 1670-1740: "Hackney for Bread" (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997); and Zionkowski, "Territorial Disputes in the Republic of Letters: Canon Formation and the Literary Profession," Eighteenth Century Theory and Interpretation 31 (1990): 3-22 and "Strategies of Containment: Stephen Duck, Ann Yearsley and the Problem of Polite Culture," Eighteenth-Century Life 13 (1989): 91-108. Background on writing and professionalism in England can be found in Geoffrey Holmes, Augustan England: Professions, State and

Society, 1680-1730 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982).

[8] Alexandre Beljame, Men of Letters and the English Public in the Eighteenth Century, 1660-1744, Dryden, Addison, Pope, ed. Bonamy Dobrée, trans. E. O. Lorimer, 1st English ed. (1881; London: Keegan Paul, 1948) 155.

[9] Paul Korshin, "Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage," Eighteenth-Century Studies 7 (1974): 453-69. Also on patronage, see A. S. Collins, Authorship in the Days of Johnson (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1929) and J. W. Saunders, The Profession of English Letters (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964).

[10] For discussion of the new commercial conditions of writing, see, for example: Terry Belanger, "Publishers and Writers in Eighteenth-Century England," Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England, ed. Isabel Rivers (New York: St. Martin's, 1982) 5-26; Deborah D. Rogers, "The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century English Literature," CLIO 18 (1989): 171-78; John Feather, "The Commerce of Letters: The Study of the Eighteenth-Century Book Trade," Eighteenth-Century Studies 17 (1984): 405-24; Martha Woodmansee, "The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the 'Author'," Eighteenth-Century Studies 17 (1984): 425-48.

[11] Alexander Pope, The Art of Sinking in Poetry, ed. Edna Leake Steeves (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968) 11.

[12] See, for example, Timothy Dykstal, "The Politics of Taste in the Spectator," The Eighteenth Century 35 (1994): 46-63.

[13] The Grub Street Journal (London, 1736).

[14] See, for example, Christopher Hill, "Censorship and English Literature," The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill, vol. 1 (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1985) 54-55.

[15] Mark Rose, Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright, 33-34.

[16] See Brean Hammond, "Scriblerian Self-Fashioning," The Yearbook of English Studies 18 (1988): 109-124. Hammond notes that in Scriblerian eyes, "mechanical" writers intended their texts only to have material value (113).

[17] See Kathy MacDermott, "Literature and the Grub Street Myth," Literature and History 8 (1982): 159-69.

[18] Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, The Politics and Poetics of Transgression (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1986) 104.

[19] Daniel Defoe, A Vindication of the Press (1718; Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1951) 21.

[20] See Hammond, "Scriblerian Self-Fashioning," 111.

[21] As a Dissenter, Defoe was banned from attending Oxford and Cambridge. He was educated instead at the Rev. Charles Morton's academy at Newington Green, a school devoted to teaching the sons of Nonconformists. Instead of emphasizing Greek and Latin, the curriculum was heavily weighted toward modern science and philosophy and the study of the English language. Thus, Defoe did not share the classical background of writers such as Pope, Swift and Dryden. See Paula Backsheider's biography, Daniel Defoe: His Life (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989) and her study of Defoe in relation to his contemporaries, Daniel Defoe: Ambition and Innovation (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1986), especially chapter one, "The Bent and Genius of the Age," 3-11.

[22] On models of professional authorship, see Dustin Griffin, "The Beginnings of Modern Authorship: Milton and Dryden," Milton Quarterly 24 (1990): 1-7.

[23] John Brewer, The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997) 144.

[24] Linda Zionkowski observes that Swift and Pope employed the notion of a "glut" of publications polemically, to preface "discussions of who did or did not belong to the literary 'profession'" ("Territorial Disputes" 4).

[25] Alexander Pope, "Martin Scriblerus, of the Poem," The Dunciad Variorum in The Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. James Sutherland (London: Methuen, 1965) 5: 49.

[26] See Eric V. Chandler, "The Public Sphere and Eighteenth-Century Anxieties about Cultural Production in England," Semiotics 1995, ed. C. W. Spinks and John Deely (New York: Peter Lang, 1996) 111-19. See also Dustin Griffin, "Fictions of Authorship," 188-91.

[27] For example, Swift's narrator in the Tale of a Tub comments on the sheer worthlessness of much printed exchange: "What is then become of those immense bales of paper which must needs have been employed in such numbers of books? Can these be wholly annihilate, and so of a sudden,

as I pretend? [. . .] It ill befits the distance between your highness and me, to send you for ocular conviction to a jakes or an oven, to the windows of a bawdy-house, or to a sordid lantern. Books, like men their authors, have no more than one way of coming into the world, but there are then thousand ways to go out of it, and return no more" (Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. Herbert Davis, I: 21).

[28] The Poems of Jonathan Swift, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958) 2: 642.

[29] Spectator, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965) 4: 590.

[30] Marlon B. Ross, "Authority and Authenticity: Scribbling Authors and the Genius of Print in Eighteenth-Century England," The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi (Durham: Duke UP, 1994) 238.

[31] For a discussion of the relation between character and literary authority, see L. S. Horsley, "Rogues or Honest Gentlemen: The Public Characters of Queen Anne Journalists," Texas Studies in Literature and Language 18(1976): 198-228.

[32] Elizabeth Eisenstein notes that literary property rights focused on the text as the work of an individual author, thus transforming cultural concepts of authority by "undermin[ing] older concepts of collective authority." See Eisenstein, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979) 2: 122.

[33] See Carole Fabricant, "Pope's Moral, Political, and Cultural Combat," The Eighteenth Century 29 (1988): 165-87.

[34] Dunciad in Four Books I.1-2. Quotations hereafter not cited as DV for the Dunciad Variorum refer to the Dunciad in Four Books.

[35] See Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's discussion of Pope's effort in the Dunciad to exclude the material of popular culture from the refined public sphere in The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, 109-118.

[36] Richard Savage, An Author to be Lett, ed. James Sutherland (1729; Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1960). Another work by Savage in the same vein is The Authors of the Town (London, 1725).

[37] "The Art of Scribling, Address'd to All the Scriblers of the Age" (London, 1733) 4.

[38] "The Art of Scribling," 4.

[39] Brean Hammond, "'Guard the Sure Barrier': Pope and the Partitioning of Culture," Pope: New Contexts, ed. David Fairer (New York: Harvester and Wheatsheaf, 1990) 231.

[40] Hammond writes that "[n]ot only is it the case that the social circumstances of the dunces included in Pope's poem are considerably varied [. . .] but their literary abilities are equally diverse" ("'Guard the Sure Barrier,'" 231).

[41] See Frederic V. Bogel, "Dulness Unbound: Rhetoric and Pope's Dunciad," PMLA 97 (1982): 844-55. Bogel argues that the Dunciad's "rhetoric at once establishes and partly erodes the distinctions on which Pope's verse usually depends, and it does not because Pope secretly envies the dunces but because the creation of meaning depends as much on the power to undo distinctions as on the power to establish them" (846).

[42] See Claudia Thomas, "Pope and his Dunciad Adversaries: Skirmishes on the Borders of Gentility," Cutting Edges: Postmodern Critical Essays on Eighteenth-Century Satire, ed. James E. Gill, Tennessee Studies in Literature, vol. 37 (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1995) 275-300.

[43] William Warner, Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1998) 43.

[44] On eighteenth-century uses of insect imagery, see Paul Fussell, "'The Vermin of Nature': Hierarchy and Moral Contempt," The Rhetorical World of Augstan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from Swift to Burke (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965) 231-61.

[45] Tatler, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) 3: 187.

[46] "To Doctor Delany," 69-74 in The Poems of Jonathan Swift, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958) 2: 502. See also Arno Löffler, "'Respublica Grubstreetaria': The Scribblers in Swift's Poetry," Proceedings of the First Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift, ed. Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Veinken (Munich: Wilhelm Vink Ferlag, 1985) 145-56.

[47] Griffin, "Fictions of Authorship," 182.

[48] Pope, "Martin Scriblerus, of the Poem," Dunciad

Variorum in Poems of Alexander Pope 5: 50.

[49] Swift, "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift," 165-68, Poems of Jonathan Swift 2: 558.

[50] Swift, "To a Friend who had been much abused in many inveterate Libels," 7-8 in Poems of Jonathan Swift 2: 506.

[51] Swift, "To Doctor Delany," 141-44 in Poems of Jonathan Swift 2: 504.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## REPUTATION, THE PUBLIC SELF AND THE "PAPER WARS": THE CASE OF ALEXANDER POPE

"[I]t is evident," Daniel Defoe observes, "(tho' it seems a Paradox) that it is a Reputation to be Scandalized."[1] While English law conceived of reputation as a form of personal property -- one's own "good name" -- that could be protected as such, Defoe's comment suggests that the self is actually constructed in the public sphere, that identity is constituted rather than potentially violated by publicity. Scandal, apparently destructive of reputation, actually confers it, as Defoe explains when he amplifies his riddle-like observation: the person who is the object of scandal "is allow'd some Merit, when Envy attacks him, and the World might not be sensible of it in General, without a public Encounter in Criticism; and many Authors would be Buried in Oblivion were they not kept alive by Clamours against their Performances" (15). The author, Defoe suggests, literally lives in the public eye; publicity produces the public self. The famous case of John Partridge exemplifies this phenomenon. When Jonathan Swift published a pamphlet predicting the death of the astrologer John Partridge and followed that prognostication with an announcement of Partridge's demise, an elegy and an epitaph, Partridge was forced to demonstrate to the public his

continued life, publishing advertisements and writing to Ireland's postmaster (a friend of Swift's, who in turn published Partridge's letter).[2] Partridge's success was partial at best; the Stationers' Company struck his name from their rolls of authors.[3] One pamphlet that took part in the joke, Squire Bickerstaff Detected, purports to be Partridge's relation of events the night he "died" and his fruitless efforts to convince others that he is alive. When a sexton comes to find out details for the funeral, Partridge protests:

> Why, Sirrah, says I, you know me well enough; you know I am not dead, and how dare you affront me after this Manner? Alack-a-day, Sir, replies the Fellow, why it is in Print, and the whole Town knows you are dead [. . .]. Why, it is strange, Sir, says he, you should make such a Secret of your Death, to us that are your Neighbours [. . .].[4]

In eighteenth-century print culture, it was not just texts but selves that circulated and proliferated. These selves were a convergence of the categories of private and public. As the home and family were increasingly marked as the environment of true identity, as the space termed "private life" was carved out as the origin of the subject, the private self, ironically, became publicly relevant. The privileging of the private self and the ideology of merit spurred public purchase on private life. Claims to public authority were increasingly mediated by appeal to private behavior. While the premise of such appeals was exposure -- the private life revealed, in support of or in detriment to

public standing -- the process of public representation was in fact the process of invention, as the Partridge episode illustrates. Print had the power to produce identity as it represented a private life.[5] The life so presented was a fiction spawning other fictions, as different writers offered up competing representations. The case of Alexander Pope reveals this process with unusual clarity, for representing Pope was a much-pursued activity in the first half of the eighteenth century, prompted in large part by Pope's own claims of authority in representing himself and others.

The direction of Pope's representations is toward establishing his place in relation to other writers. In the preface to Gulliveriana, a collection of attacks on and replies to Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, Jonathan Smedley expresses surprise that these "[t]wo singular People should so outwit themselves, and should fall into such a common Frenzy of Self-Conceit, as needlessly to insult other Writers, to despise them, to bid Defiance to them, and, of Consequence, to raise a Paper-War between themselves and a whole Army of Authors [. . .]."[6] This "Paper War" was waged in part in the pamphlet attacks on Pope and in Pope's own works. As J. V. Guerinot has noted, the "libellous, almost purely personal attack, usually in the form of a pamphlet, was a common thing."[7] Over a thirty-three year span, Alexander Pope was the subject of some 150 pamphlets, many in response to the Dunciad. Critics have, until

recently, tended to disown the pamphlets, which attack Pope on personal ground -- his religion, family background, personal character, and physical deformity. Pope's satires and other poems do not simply precipitate the pamphlet attacks; they participate in discourse with them and employ the same tactics.[8] The pamphlets mark Pope's works as themselves instances of scandal writing. Pope's contemporaries read the Dunciad, for example, as an assault on individual writers more than as a satire about the state of culture, and they recognized it as a calculated bid for public authority. These writers, dismissed by Pope as libellous "dunces," were quick to point to the defamatory elements of his own texts. The pamphleteers were also concerned with responding to Pope's representations: rebutting Pope's claims for himself, putting forth alternative views of him, attempting to clear their own names of charges Pope made against them or to change the public's perception of them. Reputation was key to establishing public credibility in early print culture and thus became the battle ground of the paper wars.

Pope depicts himself dominating his contemporary authors. He is wearied, in the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," by lesser writers' unrelenting recognition of and deference to his literary authority:

> What Walls can guard me, or what Shades can hide?
> They pierce my Thickets, thro' my Grot they glide.
> By land, by water, they renew the Charge,
> They stop the Chariot, they board the Barge.
> (7-10)

All fly to Twit'nam, and in humble strain
Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain. (21-22)[9]

The other writers are the foundation on which Pope builds his public self: a private self under siege.[10] They force Pope to mete out literary judgments: "Seiz'd and ty'd down to judge, how wretched I! / Who can't be silent, and who will not lye." (33-34). Having established in the first eighty lines of the poem the public recognition of his literary authority, Pope delivers his assessment of the working writers generally. The Dunciad, he avows, reveals "[t]hat Secret to each Fool, that he's an Ass" (80). Pope's ridiculing of other writers, he reasons, is hardly damaging to them because they lack the discernment to recognize his condemnation:

You think this cruel? take it for a rule,
No creature smarts so little as a Fool.
[ . . . . . .]
Who shames a Scribler? break one cobweb thro',
He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew;
Destroy his Fib, or Sophistry; in vain,
The Creature's at his dirty work again;
Thron'd in the Centre of his thin designs;
Proud of a vast extent of flimzy lines. (82-94)

Pope hinges his position as author in relation to the scribbler, who is entirely without self-awareness. It is a lack of self-consciousness, an oblivion to missing talent that provides a counter-point to Pope's own unself-conscious literary command as child poet:

Why did I write? what sin to me unknown
Dipt me in Ink, my Parents', or my own?
As yet a Child, nor yet a Fool to Fame,
I lisp'd in Numbers, for the Numbers came.
(125-28)

Pope deliberately represents himself as a poet who became such without deliberation. The intentionality of publication, however, requires different treatment; he describes an initiation into authorship in which he is anointed by the representatives of traditional literary authority:

> But why then publish? Granville the polite
> And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
> Well-natur'd Garth inflam'd with early praise,
> And Congreve lov'd, and Swift endur'd my Lays;
> The Courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read,
> Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head,
> And St. John's self (great Dryden's friends before)
> With open arms receiv'd one Poet more.
> Happy my Studies, when by these approv'd!
> Happier their Author, when by these belov'd!
> From these the world will judge of Men and Books,
> Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cooks.
> (135-46)

Even as Pope positions himself as the successor in a literary tradition, he is haunted by the accession to publication of a new group of writers ("Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cooks") and scandal writing's access to posterity -- he augments his self-justification with a denunciation of the purveyors of scandal, promising their muteness before future audiences. He goes on in a footnote to the final line above to assert that it is sanctioned words such as his own that will survive, not those of "Authors of secret and scandalous History" (Pope's note, 146). When Pope presents himself as a source of disinterested, impersonal literary discourse, he suggests that his own writings of personal attack are somehow above the fray, an impression buttressed by his

catalog of his own forbearance in the face of constant personal attack (147-74). Pope claims for himself an imperial distance ("I sought no homage from the Race that write; / I kept, like Asian Monarchs from their sight" [219-20]) and independence that places him squarely outside the competitive literary marketplace:[11]

> Oh let me live my own! and die so too!
> ('To live and die is all I have to do:')
> Maintain a Poet's Dignity and Ease,
> And see what friends, and read what books I
> please. (261-64)

Far from participating in libelous writing, Pope maintains, he is driven only by service to virtue, a stand he portrays as heroic and self-sacrificing. Pope suggests that he is simply the victim of others' defamations, a burden he bears for being willing to expose anyone's vice, regardless of rank ("A Knave's a Knave, to me, in ev'ry State" [361]). He justifies his own defamatory writing in the Dunciad by depicting himself as the long-enduring victim of such attacks:

> Full ten years slander'd, did he once reply?
> Three thousand Suns went down on Welsted's Lye:
> To please a Mistress, One aspers'd his life;
> He lash'd him not, but let her be his Wife:
> Let Budgel charge low Grubstreet on his quill,
> And write whate'er he pleas'd, except his Will;
> Let the Two Curls of Town and Court, abuse
> His Father, Mother, Body, Soul, and Muse.
> Yet why? that Father held it for a rule
> It was a Sin to call our Neighbour Fool,
> That harmless Mother thought no Wife a Whore, --
> Hear this! and spare his Family, James More!
> Unspotted Names! and memorable long,
> If there be Force in Virtue, or in Song. (374-87)

Pope uses the claim of long-standing abuse, as well as an upbringing that taught him not to slander or libel, to legitimate his attacks on others in the Dunciad, the wellspring of the pamphlets against him. The prefatory material of the Dunciad shows Pope situating his text within an ongoing controversy about publicity and reputation. Pope understood well the appeal of scandal, and he simultaneously promises to satisfy the readers' appetites and to maintain a scrupulous commitment to justice. He will dispense with the teasing cover of invented names in order to protect the innocent -- and also to capture more assuredly his intended victims. "I make no doubt," declares the fictional editor, Martin Scriblerus, "the Author's own motive to use real names rather than feigned names, was his care to preserve the Innocent from any false Application" (Dunciad Variorum 8). Pope positions himself as the opponent of libel, as he prepares to attack the reputations of his now clearly identified targets. Throughout the Dunciad, Pope voices a righteous indignation that, he suggests, shields him from imputations of scandal. His writing is prompted only by the justness of his cause.

The commentary that accompanies the poem in its Variorum edition is largely devoted to expanding the defamatory references to individuals in the verse itself. Pope claims for this commentary both the status of truth and the pleasure inherent in discovering a secret, even when its subject is beneath notice: "the reader cannot but derive one

pleasure from the very Obscurity of the persons it treats of, that it partakes of the nature of a Secret, which most people love to be let into, tho' the Men or the Things be ever so inconsiderable or Trivial" (DV 8).

It is the dunces' very evanescence, Pope contends, that compels him to expose them. He will need to include in his work historical facts that will acquaint future readers with his soon-to-be forgotten subjects, a measure Pope represents as a gesture of magnanimity from his own poetic immortality:

> Of the Person it was judg'd proper to give some account: for since it is only in this monument that they must expect to survive (and here survive they will, as long as the English tongue shall remain such as it was in the reigns of Queen ANNE and King GEORGE) it seem'd but humanity to bestow a word or two upon each, just to tell what he was, what he writ, when he liv'd, or when he dy'd. (DV 8)

For those by whom Pope feels more personally wronged, he devises his poem as a kind of mark of Cain: "If a word or two more are added upon the chief Offenders; 'tis only as a paper pinn'd upon the breast, to mark the Enormities for which they suffer'd; lest the Correction only should be remember'd, and the Crime forgotten" (DV 8).

Pope depicts himself as the innocent victim of the dunces' vicious libels. In response to the Dunciad, Pope charges, the hacks conspired to prove him one of their own: "I perceiv'd that most of these authors had been (doubtless very wisely) the first Aggressors: they had been try'd till they were weary, what was to be got by railing at each other; no body was either concern'd, or supriz'd, if this or

that Scribler was prov'd a Dunce: but every one was curious to read what could be said to prove Mr. POPE one, and was ready to pay something for such a discovery" (DV 12). The distinction between Pope and the dunces, which Pope propounds in the poem was, of course, not so self-evident, perhaps even to Pope. The Dunciad in this sense becomes a defensive gesture, as Helen Deutsch has noted: "[T]he Grub Street phenomenon [. . .] made Pope's literary career economically possible, and Pope himself potentially indistinguishable from a host of other 'scriblers.' What better way to show their insignificance, and mark his own enduring value, than to confine the dunces to the hell of a historical particularity?"[12]

Pope suggests that the detraction against him is highly marketable, thus indicting together the dunces and the commodified system of literature. While he has been attacked on a personal level, Pope contends, he has attacked others only on the grounds of their writing. In the "Letter to the Publisher," signed "William Cleland" but generally accepted as Pope's, the author insists that "ill success [. . .] had transported [Pope's critics] to personal abuse, either of him or (what I think he could less forgive) of his friends. They had call'd men of virtue and honour Bad Men, long before he had either leisure or inclination to call them Bad Writers" (DV 12). While the attacks they made were personal, however, their animus was professional: "Now what had Mr. POPE done before to incense them? He had published

those works which are in the hands of every body, in which not the least mention is made of any of them" (DV 12).

Pope goes on in the "Letter to the Publisher" to claim a public moral imperative. Cleland's letter has been occasioned by his indignation at the abuse Pope has suffered, and he has been moved to compile notes on the abusers for the publisher to include in the poem's commentary. Pope uses Cleland's letter to claim his own disinclination to write such a commentary:

> I should still have been silent, if either I had seen any inclination in my friend to be serious with such accusers, or if they had only attack'd his writings: since whoever publishes, puts himself on his tryal by his country. But when his moral character was attack'd, and in a manner from which neither Truth nor Virtue can secure the most Innocent [. . .]. Then I thought, since the danger is common to all, the concern ought to be so; and that it was an act of justice to detect the Authors [. . .]. (DV 12-13)

Pope explains the defense of his private life on grounds familiar from his justifications of exposing others: justice and the public interest. Cleland also announces a private concern for Pope's reputation, and indeed for his own:

> I am one of that number who have long lov'd and esteem'd Mr. POPE, and had often declared it was not his Capacity or Writings (which we ever thought the least valuable part of his character) but the honest, open, and beneficent Man that we most esteem'd and lov'd in him. Now if what these people say were believ'd, I must appear to all my friends either a fool or a knave, either impos'd on my self, or imposing on them: So that I am as much interested in the confutation of these calumnies, as he is himself. (DV 13)

Pope suggests, on one hand, that all "Cleland" must do is to

show the public the true, private Pope; on the other, he alludes to a need constantly to maintain reputation, as Cleland explains that his intervention is motivated in part by a need to preserve others' favorable assessment of his own judgment.

While many critics have taken Pope and Swift at their word and agreed that they attacked other writers on literary rather than personal grounds, Pat Rogers has rightly noted that the two modes of attack cannot be properly seen as distinct: "[K]nown personal defects will be exploited in the [Dunciad] to heighten the specifically literary misdemeanors of the authors and booksellers presented. Other failings, diagnosed under the cultural aspect, will be dramatised to reinforce the personal innuendo against a particular figure."[13] While Pope positions his poem as an antidote to the scandalous public sphere, an arm of retribution that will grasp those whom the law cannot reach, it exploits scandal as a means of discrediting, personally and literarily, Pope's professional enemies.

Pope affects a position of injured, bemused innocence that met ill-reception from his targets in the Dunciad. John Henley, for example, author of How Now, Gossip Pope? (1736) situates Pope squarely in the exchange of scandal; indeed, he intones, Pope is a master of it. Henley responds to his depiction in the Dunciad by labeling Pope a scandalmonger ("The World love's Romance, and Mr. POPE can hit that just Taste at the Expence of any Man's or Family's

Reputation") and a sort of vigilante: "Mr. POPE, by the Conceit of his Talents, Wit, Numbers, Popularity, and Diction, thinks himself entitled to destroy and blast the Credit of every or any Person, right or wrong, so all others, on the like Imagination of superior Force or Skill, might murder, hack and maul as they pleased."[14] He suggests, too, that a public letter to Pope is thoroughly appropriate, as Pope himself exploits whatever elements of his private life might improve his public standing:

> There can be no Absurdity in writing to you by way of the Press; was I to make a miserable punning Distinction between written and printed Letters, [. . .] the Wit would be higher than you, my Lord Bolingbroke, or the Dean, often condescend to treat us with in your Hash of familiar Epistles, lately published; however, to send a Letter in Print, open to the World, has the Sanction of your Practice, and what is it, which that will not authorize? Was I to send it written to you by the Post, you would print it, if you thought it might turn to your own Benefit. (1-2)

Henley accuses Pope of himself ignoring any distinction between public and private discourse, so that written (not printed and therefore not public) discourse will be catapulted by Pope into the public sphere if he believes that such exposure is to his advantage.[15]

In the advertisement before the "Epistle to Arbuthnot," Pope negotiates the difficult terrain of condemning personal satire by others while engaging in it himself. As usual, the crux of his justification is his own veracity: those depicted will recognize themselves because there is "not a Circumstance but what is true." He has omitted the names of

those who have attacked him: "I shall have this Advantage, and Honour, on my side, that whereas by their proceeding, any Abuse may be directed at any man, no Injury can possibly be done by mine, since a Nameless Character can never be found out, but by its Truth and Likeness" (95). Pope simultaneously effaces and asserts his power as writer, claiming on the one hand to be a mere recorder of what is true, boasting on the other of his capacity to produce a perfect likeness. Mimesis is at once Pope's alibi and self-proclaimed achievement.

In the "First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated" (1733), Pope continues the project he takes up in the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" of defending himself against charges of over-particularity in his writing. The poem takes the form of a dialogue between Pope and his friend, William Fortescue, as Fortescue prepares Pope for a legal defense of his writing. While Pope notes incredulously that "There are (I scarce can think it, but am told) / There are to whom my Satire seems too bold,"[16] Fortescue counsels caution, urging Pope to abandon satire, either giving up writing or at least turning to verse that merely pleases. The poems that take personal aim, Fortescue warns, make him hated, but Pope responds that his writing is aimed only at those who deserve it:

> Satire's my Weapon, but I'm too discreet
> To run a Muck, and tilt at all I meet;
> I only wear it in a Land of Hectors,
> Thieves, Supercargoes, Sharpers, and Directors.
> (69-72)

Pope makes his personal attacks heroic; he is "arm'd for Virtue, when I point the Pen" (105). He goes even further in "Dialogue II" of the "Epilogue to the Satires," where he raises his work to an almost mystical level:

> O sacred Weapon! left for Truth's defence,
> Sole Dread of Folly, Vice, and Insolence!
> To all but Heav'n-directed hands deny'd,
> The Muse may give thee, but the Gods must guide.
> Rev'rent I touch thee! but with honest zeal;
> To rowze the Watchmen of the Publick Weal,
> To Virtue's Work provoke the tardy Hall,
> And goad the Prelate slumb'ring in his Stall.
> (212-19)

While Pope enshrines his exposure of others as a public service, in the Dunciad he depicts other authors' scandal writing as literal dives into the gutter. The dunces assemble at Fleet Ditch to compete in Dulness's game of plunging into the filth:

> 'Here strip, my children! here at once leap in,
> Here prove who best can dash thro' thick and thin,
> And who the most in love of dirt excel,
> Or dark dexterity of groping well.
> Who flings most filth, and wide pollutes around
> The stream, be his the Weekly Journals bound,
> A pig of lead to him who dives the best;
> A peck of coal a-piece shall glad the rest.'
> (2: 275-82)

The line that Pope draws between his defamatory writing and that of most of his contemporaries is legitimacy. His work, he declares, is authorized by its truth and its public-interestedness, while the work of the dunces is characterized by self-interest: they libel because it pays. While the pamphleteers against Pope have been generally regarded as practitioners of libel, quite a few take issue

with the practice of invading private life for the purposes of public dispute. They object to Pope's use of defamatory accusations about their lives in order to denigrate their standing as authors. Leonard Welsted, for example, writes that "no Attack in Print upon a Man's Poetical Character ought to be repaid by Lampoon and Virulence upon the Moral Character of his Antagonist."[17] Lewis Theobald, king of the dunces in the original Dunciad and Dunciad Variorum, provoked Pope's ire when he criticized the poet's edition of Shakespeare. In reply to Pope's depiction of him, Theobald published A Letter to Mr. Mist (1728); in it, he argues that Pope's labels of duncehood can be tolerated, but his personal attacks cannot:

> My Notion is, that a Poetical War should confine itself to Demerits in the Science of Poetry; and all the Attacks be levell'd either against Failures in Genius, or against the Pretensions of writing without one: But to draw into the Quarrel Parts of private Character, to fall on Persons independent even of the Fraternity of Writers, is intentionally to declare War against human Society. They, therefore, who oppose a Writer indulging himself in that bad Strain, employ their Pens in the common Cause of Mankind: And such a Writer should think it particular good Luck, if he is pursued as Fair Game, and not hunted down as one of a Feræ Naturæ; a Beast of Prey, that ought to have a Price set on his Head.[18]

Theobald's objection to Pope's writing uses as a standard of condemnation the publication of the private self, but the separation he posits between private and public was itself a matter of ambiguity. Craig Calhoun has defined the private as "simultaneously that which is not subject to the purview of the state and that which concerns personal ends distinct

from the public good, the res publica or matters of legitimate public concern."[19] Theobald appeals to this latter sense of privacy, suggesting that Pope has overstepped the bounds of fair exchange when he draws into the debate Theobald's private self, a matter not of legitimate public concern. In the satire debate, satire is justified (and scandal is reviled) on the grounds of public good. But Calhoun indicates the complexity of identifying the private when he further argues that "[d]ifferent public discourses commonly invoke different distinctions of what is properly 'private' and therefore not appropriately addressed in public discourse or used to settle public debates" (85). The discourse of scandal, which constituted a significant dimension of eighteenth-century print culture, is one example of such public discourse with a differing conception of the private.

Pope himself fully exploited this ambiguity surrounding privacy. In his poems, Pope produces a private self for public view. Helen Deutsch has characterized Pope's career as one "designed to place the most private gestures in the public eye," while Dustin Griffin remarks that Pope, "though always personal, is never private."[20] This quality of Pope's writing is, I argue, an assertion of public value through appeal to the private life and, beyond that, a realization of the private self in its public display. The gestures to which Deutsch alludes are not so much placed in the public eye as conceived there. In his advertisement

prefacing the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," Pope describes the poem's occasion as a wresting back to himself the power to depict his private life:

> This Paper is a Sort of Bill of Complaint, begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches as the several Occasions offer'd. I had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleas'd some Persons of Rank and Fortune [. . .], to attack in a very extraordinary manner, not only my Writings (of which, being publick the Publick may judge) but my Person, Morals, and Family, whereof to those who know me not, a truer Information may be requisite. (597)

The project of the poem, as Pope presents it here, is purely corrective: both to register the various wrongs committed against him and to redress the depiction of him made by Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in "Verses to the Imitator of Horace" and "An Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court." It is only reluctantly, Pope insists, that he publishes the poem; he airs his complaints against other writers in order to defend his private life. He distinguishes here between the publicness of his writing and the implied privateness of his "Person, Morals, and Family." It is striking, however, that he nevertheless acquiesces to the appropriation for public discussion of these private facets of his life. Rather than railing against their public status, Pope indicates only a determination to provide "those who know me not" (ie. the public) with "truer Information." Pope's "Epistle to Arbuthnot," like other of his texts, is an effort to intervene in this process, to stem the proliferation by

firmly fixing his reputation and that of others. Delarivier Manley, too, intervenes in this process, but her intervention in the interest of self-representation is undertaken in a way that shows she is fully conscious of the fluidity of any public presentation of self. Pope, by contrast, makes himself ever more vulnerable to the process through his very determination to control it.

In his "Epistle to Cobham" -- one of the "Moral Essays," published in 1734 -- Pope sounds a note of scepticism as to the ultimate knowability of any person, even oneself. He describes the inconsistencies of personality that exist not just between people generally but even within a given individual: "That each from other differs, first confess; / Next, that he varies from himself no less."[21] This variety is further colored by the observer's perceptions, so that the "true" person is doubly unknowable, both because of the multiplicity of personality and the particular vision of the observer. We are, Pope explains, fundamentally unknowable even to ourselves because the causes of our actions cannot be limited to rational explanations:

> Oft in the Passions' wild rotation tost,
> Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:
> Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,
> And what comes then is master of the field.
> As the last image of that troubled heap,
> When Sense subsides, and Fancy sports in sleep,
> (Tho' past the recollection of the thought)
> Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:
> Something as dim to our internal view,
> Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do.
>
> (41-50)

Pope's scepticism concerning the knowability of character cuts to the very premises of scandal writing: "Not always Actions show the man: we find / Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind" (61-62). He salvages some level of comprehensibility with the introduction of the "ruling passion," that impulse that most nearly draws together and explains an individual's actions.[22] "Cobham" goes beyond the problem of identity to the problem of representation. When Pope rails against scandal writing, he is presuming that the self can be misrepresented; that his own thinking suggests to him the complexity of representation leads him to focus on the maliciousness of scandal writers as a way of denoting scandal and differentiating it from satire. While he maintains in "Cobham" that we cannot know another person's motives, he becomes expert at identifying them when he writes about others, especially when he writes defensively on his own behalf.

Pope claims for himself a perfect transparency -- a transparency that gives him license to the reputations of others, too:

> I love to pour out all myself, as plain
> As downright Shippen, or as old Montagne.
> In them, as certain to be lov'd as seen,
> The Soul stood forth, nor kept a Thought within;
> In me what Spots (for Spots I have) appear,
> Will prove at least the Medium must be clear;
> In this impartial Glass, my Muse intends
> Fair to expose myself, my Foes, my Friends.[23]

The exposure of others that Pope here justifies, however, is immediately compromised by his own lack of candor, which is

seized on by the pamphleteers. Pope's physical condition is the most evocative example of such obfuscation. Pope likely suffered from Pott's disease, or tuberculosis of the spine, a condition that compressed his chest and hunched his back as his vertebrae collapsed, causing him pain and weakness. It also contributed to his small stature; Pope's adult height was only four and a half feet. In his Lives of the English Poets, Samuel Johnson includes a thorough description of Pope's frail state. He was

> so weak as to stand in perpetual need of female attendance; extremely sensible of cold, so that he wore a kind of fur doublet under a shirt of very coarse warm linen with fine sleeves. When he rose he was invested in boddice made of stiff canvass, being scarce able to hold himself erect till they were laced [. . .]. His legs were so slender that he enlarged their bulk with three pairs of stockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid; for he was not able to dress or undress himself; and neither went to bed nor rose without help. His weakness made it very difficult for him to be clean.[24]

Appearance, which would seem a matter of public self, became in Pope's case a closely guarded feature of his private life. Pope was "the most frequently portrayed individual of his generation" (Deutsch 12) and Voltaire observed that "[t]he picture of the prime minister hangs over the chimney of his own closet, but I have seen that of Mr. Pope in twenty noblemen's houses."[25] While Pope's image was a familiar part of the public domain, that image was a carefully edited one. No formal portraits depict Pope's deformity and only three sketches do: a pen and ink drawing by William Kent of the grotto at Twickenham, with a small

figure of Pope included; a red crayon drawing by William Hoare made without Pope's knowledge, as he stood conversing in Prior Park; and a doodle by Lady Burlington of Pope at cards.[26] When Joseph Warton published his edition of Pope's works in 1797, he printed as paired frontispieces an engraving of Pope's profile in the Roman style and Hoare's drawing. Deutsch, whose book provides the most sustained consideration of the influence of Pope's deformity on his work, remarks:

> Warton's unprecedented choice of frontispieces puts on show the causal connection between Pope's canonization of himself as author and the subsequent desire on the part of his reader for "an Unique of this celebrated poet" [from Hoare's inscription on the back of the drawing]. Pope, for better or worse, by making himself a celebrity has made his person public property. The voyeuristic public is eager to have the whole of it be represented. (36)

The pamphleteers' revelation of Pope's true condition to readers is not prompted by admiration or voyeurism. Rather, for them it functions as a metaphor for the illegitimacy of the position Pope claims for himself. John Dennis, in just one example of a common trope in the pamphlets, insists that Pope's readers read his body, on the assumption that Pope's own physical state rebuts the claims for authority he himself makes: "Deformity of this Libeller, is Visible, Present, Lasting, Unalterable, and Peculiar to himself. 'Tis the mark of God and Nature upon him, to give us warning that we should hold no Society with him, as a Creature not of our Original, not of our Species."[27] Exposing Pope's

physical condition in the pamphlets is a version of exposing his character. Unveiling his true physical state, furthermore, is proof of self-interested elision on Pope's part, and so problematizes his own impulse to expose others. Pope's body becomes a site of contention in determining his reputation -- both for contemporaries and for posterity -- because his body becomes the text underlying everything that he produces. Indeed, Pope's body is in itself a scandal: a private truth revealed in rebuttal to his self-presentation as a formidable combatant for virtue:

> Hear this, and tremble! you, who 'scape the Laws.
> Yes, while I live, no rich or noble knave
> Shall walk the World, in credit, to his grave.
> TO VIRTUE ONLY AND HER FRIENDS, A FRIEND
> The World beside may murmur, or commend.[28]

The contrast between Pope's actual and projected selves is stark, as Carole Fabricant has commented. "Popeian self-dramatization" makes the reader "riveted above all on Pope's roles as the avenger, the god-like bully, the warrior tilting in the fields of corruption, the potent, bigger-than-life hero: an ironic and outrageous and touching contrast to the figure Pope actually cut as a physically fragile, deformed, almost dwarfish poet who walked about in frequent fear of his safety."[29] Interestingly, Fabricant's comment echoes the pamphleteers' project; like them, she sees Pope's physicality as a literal embodiment of a self that erases the image he has presented. Armed with the knowledge of Pope's actual condition, her reading implies, we construct a different vision of the poet than that which

Pope promotes. When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, angered by Pope's reference to her in "The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated" ("From furious Sappho scarce a milder Fate, / P-x'd by her Love, or libell'd by her Hate" [83-84]), published "Verses Address'd to the Imitator of Horace," she reached behind the poet's postures of physical, poetic and social influence:

> Who must but laugh, this Bully when he sees,
> A puny Insect shiv'ring at a Breeze?
> One over-match'd by ev'ry Blast of Wind,
> Insulting and provoking all Mankind.[30]

Pope's concealment of his fragile body behind a swaggering posture provided the pamphleteers with exactly the premise of delving into the private life on which scandal writing (whether deemed libel or personal satire) depends. George Duckett, for example, in the 1729 pamphlet Pope Alexander's Supremacy and Infallibility Examin'd, positions himself as an advocate for a public that has been -- and will, without his assistance, in the future be -- duped:

> What Courage, what Allies, what Stature must future Ages conceive this Giant Warriour to be aided with [when they read the Dunciad] They will imagine him at least to be Seven Foot high, beyond the Growth of his Contemporaries, both in Stature and Understanding. Will they not be surprized, when I assure them, and I do hereby assure them (for, I, Sir, put in my claim to Immortality, too, by being annexed to you) that this same Gyant, was but about four Foot and an Half high, of a Structure a little irregular, and his genius Low and indecent as his Form.[31]

In this passage, Duckett enacts revelation, showing

posterity the "real" Pope that lurks behind his writing. Duckett draws on a self-portrait that is only implied; he offers a revised reading of the author to supplant the one a reader gathers from the Dunciad and many of Pope's other writings. Pope's body functions as a rebuttal to the Dunciad; the maliciousness of that text is revealed when his similarly twisted body is uncovered. Pope denounces attacks that center on his private self; he simultaneously uses that self to validate his writing. Duckett reverses the equation, using Pope's private self to denounce his writing. Jonathan Smedley, in contrast, turns Pope's condition into a mitigation of malice that belittles Pope's self-announced cultural authority:

> The Frame and Make of P----'s Body is thrown into the favourable Scale, and inclines People to excuse and forgive him; for it is generally remark'd, that crooked, minute, and deform'd People are peevish, quarelsome, waspish, and ill-natur'd; and the Reason is, the Soul has not Room enough to persuade and expand itself thro' all their nibbed, tiney Parts, and this makes it press sorely on the Brain, which is of a yielding Substance; and this Pressure again causes frequent Irritations and Twinges on the Nerves, which makes the crooked Person exert his Hands, his Feet, and his Tongue, in sudden Starts and Fits, which are very uneasy to himself, and which prove disagreeable and outrageous, often, to others.[32]

This depiction is hardly that to which Pope aspires; it is in accordance, instead, with the very image of involuntary, destructive writing that Pope and others characterize with derogatory references to the "scribling itch."

Ironically, the power and authority that Pope claims

for himself when he writes lines such as "In this impartial Glass, my Muse intends / Fair to expose myself, my Foes, my Friends" is of a piece with the exposure by which he also suffers. This is what leads him into the flimzy distinctions between scandal and satire that are woven through his verse and that form the core of poems such as the "Epistle to Arbuthnot," "Imitation of the First Book of the Second Satire of Horace" and the first and second parts of the "Epilogue to the Satires." J. V. Guerinot, in introducing his bibliography of pamphlet attacks on Pope, is almost apologetic for engaging the genre. But the pamphlets are not just defamations of Pope; they are, although in almost every case less expertly crafted, in the same vein as much of Pope's satire. What is striking about the pamphlets and Pope's own texts is the degree to which the act of scandal writing is implicated in determining public authority. Pope builds his authority on denunciations of scandal writing, then uses such writing to secure his own position. Pope continually situates his work in a classical tradition of satire as a way of distinguishing it from the popular market of literature in his own day. But the pamphleteers pull him back, returning him to the contemporary context and putting Pope in a defensive position as they remind readers that Pope himself employs the tactics of libel. And while, in this "Paper-War" the status of any particular writer is in a state of perpetual

revision and rebuttal, the cultural centrality of scandal is steadily reinforced.

In July 1742, Colley Cibber published A Letter to Mr. Pope, in response to Pope's treatment of him in The New Dunciad (March 1742). Cibber responds to charges Pope has made against him, carefully delineating between their respective investments in their reputations: "I wrote more to be Fed, than to be Famous [. . .]. And I own myself so contented a Dunce, that I would not have even your merited Fame in Poetry, if it were to be attended with half the fretful Solicitude you seem to have lain under to maintain it."[33] Cibber smarts particularly under Pope's line that "Colley has his Lord and Whore," observing first that such unfounded accusation could as well be turned on Pope. "Would not the Satyr have been equally just?" he demands. "Or would any sober Reader have seen more in the Line, than a wide mouthful of Ill-Manners? Or would my professing myself a Satyrist give me a Title to wipe my foul Pen upon the face of every Man I did not like?" (44-45). Cibber's accusations do not remain in the hypothetical realm, however; he relates a story of years before, when he, Pope and Lord Warwick went "to a certain House of Carnal Recreation, near the Hay-Market; where his Lordship's Frolick propos'd was to flip his little Homer, as he call'd him, at a Girl of the Game, that he might see what sort of Figure a Man of his Size, Sobriety, and Vigour (in Verse) would make, when the frail Fit of Love had got into him

[. . .]" (47-48). The "smirking Damsel" leads Pope into another room, Cibber recounts, and finally "observing [Pope] had staid as long as without hazard of his Health he might, I threw upon the Door upon him, where I found this little hasty Hero, like a terrible Tom tit, pertly perching upon the Mount of Love! But such was my Surprize, that I fairly laid hold of his Heels, and actually drew him down safe and sound from his Danger" (48).

The image of Pope as the "Tom tit" seeded itself in the popular imagination: "[f]our engravings and at least six pamphlets, all focusing on the bawdy house story were shortly in circulation."[34] The anonymous pamphlet, Sawney and Colley (August 1742) claims to recount the aftermath of the Letter's publication, imagining Pope's reading of the Letter and ensuing furious visit to confront Cibber. Sawney and Colley plays upon the insinuations of Cibber's story while using the imagery of the "Tom tit" story to undermine Pope's contention that he operates above the level of libel. The pamphlet's Cibber taunts Pope:

> I know Thee, next, a Waspish Thing,
> Whose Bus'ness is to buzz and sting;
> Replete with Malice, Spleen, and Spite,
> I know that thou can'st Libels write;
> From sacred Throne to Stage profane
> Each spotless Character can'st stain,
> But thus thy Satire's guiltless grown,
> Who slanders all Men, slanders none;
> As impotent in Spite as Love,
> Contempt alone by each you move.[35]

Cibber's story in the Letter is intended to humiliate Pope by emasculating his public image, but the humiliation

is not really enacted by making public a private embarrassment.[36] Rather, Cibber offers an appearance of exposure: we see an image of a private Pope, but the truth of the story is ultimately irrelevant. His private self is disconnected from his public image, which itself is manipulated through claims to display his private self. Pope sought recourse by demonstrating to the public the fictionality of the tale. In a letter to his friend William Warburton, who edited his complete works, Pope instructed him to include in the notes of the revised Dunciad an account of Boileau's Epître VII, which Pope identifies as the literary model for Cibber's story.[37] Such documentation, however, was no match for the image of Pope that the public had already seized on and elaborated.

The pamphlet A Popp upon Pope is another example of the public production of Pope's private life. The pamphlet was published anonymously on June 1, 1728; Pope believed Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to be the author, and it was so attributed in the Grub Street Journal. It is a "compensatory fantasy of Pope's humiliation" (Guerinot 115), in which the poet, strolling along the Thames and "meditating Verses for the publick Good," is approached by two men who, "knowing him perfectly well, partly by his Back, and partly by his Face," begin to converse with him about the Dunciad:

> on a sudden, one of the Gentlemen hoisted poor Master Pope the Poet on his Back, whilst the other drew out from under his Coat, a long birchen Rod [. . .] and with the said long Rod, did, with

> great Violence, and unmerciful Hand, strike Master Pope so hard on his naked Posteriors, that he voided large Quantities of Ichor, or Blood [. . .]. As soon as this inhuman Whipping was over, the two Gentlemen made off, and left poor Master Pope [. . .]. When Mrs B---, a good charitable Woman, and near Neighbour of Master Pope's [. . .] chancing to come by, took him up in her Apron, and buttoning up his Breeches, carried him to the Water-side, where she got a Boat to convey him home [. . .].[38]

The pamphlet dramatizes the desire for revenge on Pope for his poem by which it, too, is motivated. Pope is denigrated by the appellation "Master" and, of course, by the administering of a disciplinary beating. The pamphlet ends with a description of Pope after the attack. He has been driven mad and "continually raves for Pen, Ink, and Paper." It is a sad spectacle, the narrator intones,

> but we cannot too much admire the Wisdom of Providence, which brings this Man to the Lash, whose wanton Wit has been lashing of others. And that this Madness leads him to rave for Pen, Ink, and Paper, whereof he has made so ill a Use, and which has been the Cause of the present Misfortune he labours under. We hope, when he returns to his Senses, he will make a better Use of them, and then may say with holy David, It's good for me that I have been afflicted. (323)

The pamphlet clearly reads as fantasy, but Pope's response is revealing. On June 14, he published an advertisement in the Daily Post denying that any such attack had occurred: "Whereas there has been a scandalous Paper cried about the Streets, under the Title of, A Popp upon Pope, insinuating that I was whipped in Ham-Walks, on Thursday last. This is to give Notice, that I did not stir out of my House at all that Day, and the same is a malicious

and ill-grounded Report. A. P."[39] Pope's response indicates the momentum that scandal writing had gained, such that so clearly imagined an account would elicit so literal a reply. The reputation created in print had taken on a life of its own, to the point that Pope could not afford to ignore such a pamphlet. Its sheer contrivance does not diminish its effect; the appearance of public revelation of the private is sufficient. In his answer, Pope seems both to recognize the power of A Popp upon Pope to influence his reputation and to be quite oblivious to the immateriality of the pamphlet's veracity.

Scandal writing claims to unveil the hidden, private life; it thus contributes to the production of the concept of privacy and is invested in the demarcation of public and private realms. At the same time, however, scandal's purpose is to violate the very boundary between public and private that it posits and encourages. Furthermore, as scandal writing multiplies, when one libel is answered with another, when each representation of a private life elicits a counter-representation, the very act of revelation is undermined by, ironically, exposing this revelation as in fact a matter of representation and invention. Scandal thus functions through these simulacrums of exposure -- and it is not thereby undone because the private selves publicly produced take on autonomous existences that do not require their limitation by the actual circumstances of an individual's life. Libel laws, attempts to contain print

culture, and tireless efforts to regulate reputation are ultimately overcome by the productive power of print.

## NOTES

[1] Daniel Defoe, Vindication of the Press (1718; Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1951) 15.

[2] Jonathan Swift, "Prediction for the Year 1708"; "The Accomplishment of the First of Mr. Bickerstaff's Predictions, Being an Account of the Death of Mr. Partridge, the Almanack-Maker"; "A Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq." in Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939) 2: 139-64.

[3] Irvin Ehrenpreis, Swift, the Man, his Works and the Age, 3 vols. (1967; Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1983) 2: 208.

[4] Squire Bickerstaff Detected in Prose Works of Jonathan Swift 2: 220. Davis notes that Addison attributed authorship of the text to Congreve (Prose Works II: xiv).

[5] For discussion of the development of the concept of private life, see Nancy Armstrong and Lennard Tennenhouse, The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life (Berkeley: U of California P, 1992) 150-59.

[6] Jonathan Smedley, Gulliveriana: or, a Fourth Volume of Miscellanies (London, 1728) x.

[7] J. V. Guerinot, Pamphlet Attacks on Alexander Pope, 1711-1744 (London: Methuen, 1969) xxvii.

[8] For discussion of the pamphlet genre and the development of the public sphere, see Alexandra Halasz, The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).

[9] Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. John Butt (London: Methuen, 1967) 4: 96-97.

[10] See Ian Donaldson, "Concealing and Revealing: Pope's Epistle to Arbuthnot," Yearbook of English Studies 18 (1988): 181-99.

[11] On Pope and the literary marketplace, see Anne Hall Bailey, "How Much for Just the Muse?: Alexander Pope's Dunciad, Book IV and the Literary Market," The Eighteenth Century 36 (1995): 24-37.

[12] Helen Deutsch, 'Resemblance and Disgrace': Alexander

Pope and the Deformation of Culture (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1996) 184.

[13] Pat Rogers, Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture (London: Methuen, 1972) 181-82.

[14] John Henley, How Now, Gossip Pope?; or, The Sweet-Singing Bird of Parnassus taken out of its pretty Cage to be roasted (London, 1736) 10-11.

[15] For background on Pope's contrivance to have Curll publish his letters, see James McLaverty, "The First Printing and Publishing of Pope's Letters," Library 6th ser., 2 (1980): 264-80; and Pat Rogers, "The Case of Pope v. Curll," Library 5th ser., 27 (1972): 326-31.

[16] Pope, "First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated," 1-2, Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. John Butt (London: Methuen, 1961) 4: 5.

[17] Leonard Welsted, One Epistle to Mr. A. Pope (London, 1730) vi.

[18] Lewis Theobald, A Letter to Mr. Mist, reprinted in Alexanderiana, ed. Jonathan Smedley (London, 1728) 326-27.

[19] Craig Calhoun, "Nationalism and the Public Sphere," Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy, ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1997), 81.

[20] Deutsch, 171; Dustin Griffin, Alexander Pope: The Poet in the Poems (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978) 12.

[21] Pope, "Epistle to Cobham," 19-20, Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. F. W. Bateson (London: Methuen, 1961) 3: 17.

[22] On Pope and character, see David B. Morris, Alexander Pope: The Genius of Sense (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1984) 179-213. For an extended discussion of the "Epistle to Cobham" and questions of identity, see Christopher Fox, Locke and the Scriblerians: Identity and Consciousness in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988).

[23] Pope, "First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated," 51-58, Poems of Alexander Pope 4: 9-11.

[24] See Samuel Johnson, Life of Pope in Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birbeck Hill (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905) 3: 197.

[25] Voltaire, "Letter XXIII: On the Regard that ought to be shown to Men of Letters," Letters Concerning the English Nation, ed. Nicholas Cronk (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994) 113.

[26] See William Kurtz Wimsatt, Portraits of Alexander Pope (New Haven: Yale UP, 1965).

[27] John Dennis, "A True Character of Mr. Pope," The Critical Works of John Dennis, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1943) 2: 105.

[28] Pope, "First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated," 118-22.

[29] Carole Fabricant, "Pope's Moral, Political, and Cultural Combat," The Eighteenth Century 29 (1988): 171.

[30] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "Verses Address'd to the Imitator of Horace," Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Essays and Poems, ed. Robert Halsband and Isobel Grundy (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977) 269.

[31] George Duckett, Pope Alexander's Supremacy and Infallibility Examin'd (London, 1729) 3.

[32] Smedley, Gulliveriana xi-xii.

[33] Colley Cibber, A Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope, ed. Helene Koon (1742; Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1973). Koon's biography of Cibber provides useful background to the incident; see Koon, Colley Cibber: A Biography (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1986).

[34] Helene Koon, "Introduction," A Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope, xii; see also Maynard Mack, Alexander Pope: A Life (New York: Norton, 1985) 779.

[35] *Sawney and Colley* and Other Pope Pamphlets, ed. W. Powell Jones (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1960) 7.

[36] For a discussion of Cibber's tactics of humiliation, see Kristina Straub, "Men from Boys: Cibber, Pope, and the Schoolboy," Sexual Suspects: Eighteenth-Century Players and Sexual Ideology (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992) 67-88.

[37] Pope, "Letter to Warburton, 6 November 1742," Correspondence of Alexander Pope, ed. George Sherburn (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956) 4: 425-26.

[38] Popp Upon Pope, reprinted in Smedley, Alexanderiana

[38] Popp Upon Pope, reprinted in Smedley, Alexanderiana 322-23.

[39] The Daily Post, June 14, 1728.

# CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have presented a two-pronged argument. First, I have argued that the concepts of scandal and the hack were developed to legitimate satire and the professional author. Writers of personal satire pointed to scandal as the defamatory genre, thus suggesting that their own work, as satire, was distinct from detractive practices. Similarly, authors participating in but nevertheless ambivalent about the literary marketplace invented the hack as the embodiment of commercial authorship. In both cases, the construction of the high form is contingent on the acceptance of a concomitant low form with which the disreputable elements of the former are associated.

This opposition between high and low forms is mirrored in the period's conceptions of privacy and publicity. In the second part of my argument, I have attempted to establish that scandal writing served as the conduit through which public authority in the period was mediated by private life. In keeping with emerging notions of subjectivity, scandal writing was predicated on the notion that public standing should be contingent on private character. Political and cultural authority could be affirmed or undermined with the exposure of actions in the private realm. As accounts of private lives circulated in print culture, however, competing representations of the private self (Pope's self-portrayals and those by his rival writers,

for example) revealed that self as constructed in, rather than existing independently of, print. These proliferating selves did not conform to libel law's conception of identify as a stable entity accurately and adequately expressed in a similarly unchanging reputation. Like the Grub Street hack, the private self produced in print is a fiction presented as faithful depiction. The two lines of my argument come together in the idea of the constructed nature of scandal writing and its object: the private selves scandal writing claimed to expose were as much inventions as the very concepts of scandal and satire, literary author and hack.

Scandal writing, treated primarily by critics such as Michael McKeon, J. Paul Hunter and Lennard Davis as a contributor to the emergence of the novel, merits study in its own right. It exemplifies one dimension of changing attitudes toward public authority in the period, as such authority became increasingly contingent on public approval and such approval was granted or withheld in part after the evaluation of private character. Consideration of scandal writing also expands our notions of public discourse beyond the boundaries of Habermasian critical-rational debate to include the highly personal but publicly relevant discourse of scandal. The examination of scandal writing thus contributes to recent efforts to theorize and historicize the categories of private and public, and advances a more complete picture of the eighteenth-century British public sphere.

This dissertation also takes part in an on-going effort to re-evaluate our conceptions of high and low culture in the period. In my argument, I have sought to break down the distinction between satire and scandal, literary and hack authors, and to suggest that these differences were purposefully invented in the period. When we circumvent such a hierarchical understanding of print culture, we broaden the explorable terrain of eighteenth-century literature to include genres like scandal narratives and pamphlet attacks. An awareness of this strain of eighteenth-century writing also destabilizes customary literary classifications, insisting that we read some of the most familiar examples of high literary satire as themselves instances of scandal writing.

The careful delineation of satire from scandal in the period was an important dimension of the project of legitimating the professional author at the expense of the working writer. Contemporaries saw in defamatory writing a kind of public discourse they feared would come to define emerging print culture, and they sought to contain it under the stigmatizing labels of libel and scandal. When we approach scandal writing as a significant eighteenth-century genre, we read through these efforts at suppression as themselves indications of scandal's consequence and reconfigure our understanding of eighteenth-century print culture as a whole.

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